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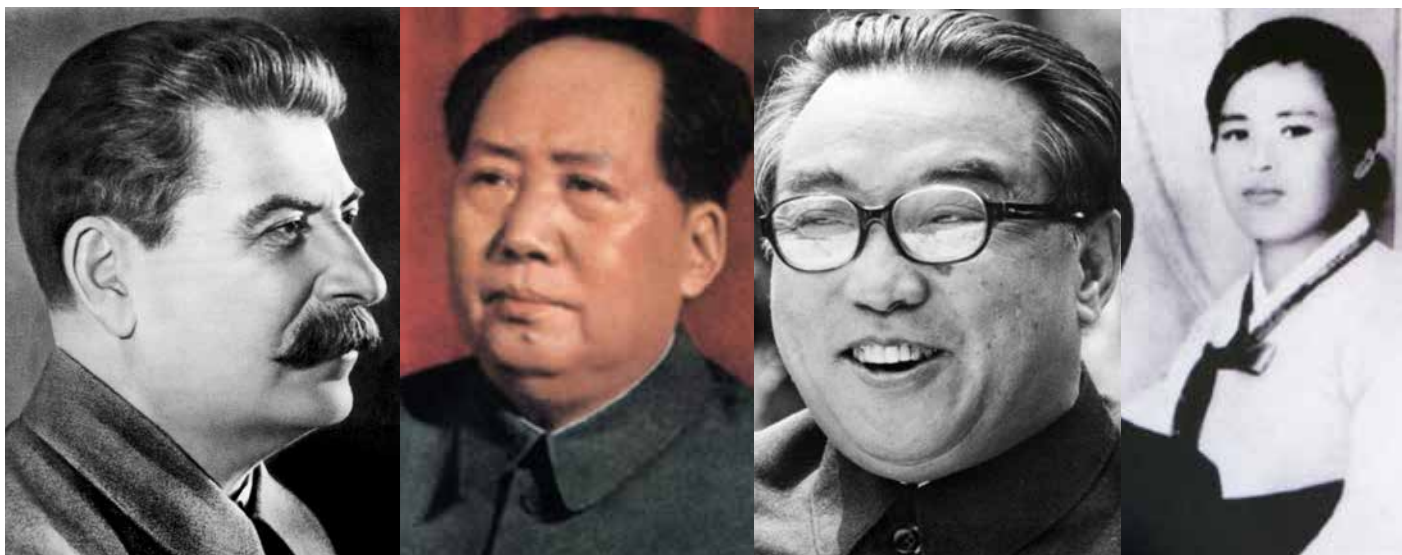




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CPK members during a press conference a protest march against unscientific COVID 19 response by government



members of CPK women league marching in Kisumu



protestors gather around Dedan Kimathi's stature during a protest organised by CPK and Hotel and Entertainment Workers Union (HEWU)



CPK cadres and siaya residents march in Siaya to protest against corruption

2022 GENERAL ELECTIONS: BOURGEOIS ILLUSION OF DEMOCRACY

Introduction: Is this the democracy Kenyans fought for?

The Kenyan politics of populism, lies, intrigues, false expectations, corruption, tribalism, and all manner of platitudes about democracy and regular elections have never stopped since the previous national elections. And now preparations and campaigns for the next general elections that will be held on 9th August 2022 are underway and are everyday news, and with a crescendo! We are told that this is democracy.

But as all this continues we must stop to ask the rhetorical question: if this is a democracy, is it the democracy the Kenyan masses struggled for and desire?

The answer from the Communist Party of Kenya (CPK) to the above question is NO! What we have now for democracy in Kenya is not the democracy we fought for. Neither is it the democracy we desire nor aspire for. In this article the term “we” means the masses of Kenya because being a communist party, CPK is the authentic voice of the majority of Kenyans. It is not our democracy but the democracy of the ruling classes of Kenya; whether in the ‘opposition’ or the executive arm of government. It is the democracy of maintaining the status quo of capitalism and imperialism, the system of exploitation and oppression of person by person, of the betrayal of the majority of Kenyans by the few Kenyan elites that control state power and the politics, economics, and culture of greed and corruption of unbridled neocolonial capitalism.

The history of multiparty democracy in Kenya

Multipartyism in Kenya came about after a long, hard, and concerted struggle during which many patriots, democracy, and human rights advocates and activists were arrested, tortured, imprisoned, detained without trial, forced into exile, expelled from educational institutions, denied employment, and persecuted in all ways. Many were assassinated during the mass demonstrations and actions of demanding the end of the then Kenya African National Union's (KANU) one-party dictatorship that was notorious for the violation of citizens' freedoms and human rights. The one-party dictatorship that



CPK Vice - Chairperson presents party documents with members of the working group of the coastal parties coalition

was against civic and political liberties also embodied the politics and culture of tribalism, nepotism, cronyism, sycophantism, greed, corruption, and unbridled capitalism that continue to ravage the country today despite the progressive constitutional changes that have been achieved hitherto.

That is why the triumph of multi-partyism in 1992 was seen by the masses of Kenya to be akin to political revolution as it gave great impetus to the liberation of the society from the regime that was one of the most notorious and brutal dictatorships in Africa. Freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of the press, civil and political liberties, recognition of the right of political parties to exist and operate, and the growth and strengthening of the civil society were some of the concrete democratic gains that Kenyans achieved after the return of multi-partyism.

However, it took ten years before the ‘opposition’ parties were able to remove the infamous Kenya African National Union (KANU) - the notorious political party that had misruled the country since independence - from power. The defeat of KANU then also meant the defeat of the most reactionary regimes in Africa. It was led by the then-dictator President Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi. The regime was certainly a stumbling block to the entrenchment and development of the culture of freedom, multiparty democracy, and human rights in the country. That is why many Kenyans also likened the defeat of Moi and KANU in the 2002 elections to the second liberation.

As soon as multi-partyism started becoming a reality in the country, Kenyans realised that it was also necessary to change the national constitution to reflect and conserve the new system of democratic governance. The old



constitution has been inherited from British colonialism and until 2010, it had been used to govern the country since independence in 1963. But just like it did to multi-partyism, the then Moi - KANU barbaric regime resisted constitutional reforms vehemently. Once again it mobilised the fascist-like security forces against Kenyan patriots and citizens who came out to demand progressive change: many Kenyans were arrested, tortured, imprisoned, detained without trial, and killed before the reactionary government was finally forced to accede to people's popular demand for a new constitution. Like freedom from colonialism and the winning of multiparty democracy, the present constitution of Kenya is the collective achievement of popular people's struggles for democracy and human rights from below.

Moism - KANUISM persists

Although Moi - KANU was defeated,

Moism - KANUISM has not yet been defeated. It is clear today that the system and its leaders whether in government or opposition have laughed their way to political and economic power to remain the ruling class and to conserve the status quo of tribalism, nepotism, corruption, primitive accumulation, backward ideas, and exploitation and oppression of the majority of Kenyans. JUBILEE, UDA, OKA coalition, and ODM are Moism - KANUISM not in form but content! The leaders of these parties are historically sons and daughters of Moism - KANUISM. Their political careers, ideology, greed, manners, and the wealth they control originate from Moism - KANUISM that perfected the system of rewarding relatives, tribal 'chiefs', cronies, opportunists, and sycophants of all sorts.

That is why today, as we prepare for the 2022 national elections, we are forced to ask the rhetorical question: 58 years

since independence from British colonialism, 30 years since the return of multi-party democracy in the country, and 11 years since the promulgation of the current national constitution, is this the democracy Kenyans struggled for? Is it the democracy we deserve and desire? And we begin by answering NO in capital letters! Here are the reasons.

The ruling class is collaborating to kill multi-partyism

To begin with, Kenyans fought for multiparty democracy but not the democracy of few political parties. There are now over 70 registered political parties in the country. This is good for the country because this manifests the hunger of Kenyans to actively participate in building the culture of freedom and democracy in the country which is necessary for carrying forward the class struggle. But, the parties of the ruling class led by JUBILEE and ODM are united in their narrow, selfish, and parochial conspiracy to kill other political parties in Kenya to remain the only political parties in the country so that together they dominate and manipulate the politics of the country to perpetuate the system of capitalism/neoliberalism.

They have started this process by conspiring to grab and share only among themselves the millions of shillings meant to fund political parties -to entrench and nurture the culture of multi-partyism in the country. Today the leaders of these coalitions popularized by the Kenyan press are spreading lies that only a few political parties will remove tribalism in the country. They do this while it is they that every day openly practicing tribalism to maintain the status quo of exploitation and primitive accumulation. In this, they also count on the support of imperialists and pro-capitalism NGOs operating in the country and that purport to support and teach Kenyans about democracy and human rights.

Capitalist democracy imported from the UK and USA

ODM, JUBILEE, and their allies Wiper, Ford Kenya, ANC, and KANU all worship bourgeoisie democracy as it is practiced in the West, particularly the USA and the United Kingdom. They see it as the alpha and omega of democracy. Yet, in the United States a country that pretends to be the most democratic in the world, many political parties are suppressed and the citizens are forced to choose to be governed by either the Republican or Democratic parties, both of which are capitalist and imperialist in ideology and practice. Similarly, in the UK all political parties are suppressed and the citizens have to choose from the Labour Party, Conservative Party, or Liberal Democrats - all of which represent capitalism and imperialism. The idea is to use the political parties to conserve the democracy of the ruling capitalist classes and to use it to dilute class struggles within the

countries by creating illusions of democracy and political changes through regular national elections.

This is the democracy that Kenya's ruling class is importing for Kenya. It is not the democracy that the Kenyan masses wish and aspire for as the Constitution of Kenya stipulates. On the contrary, it is the democracy of the exploitation and oppression of the majority of Kenyans by the few rich Kenyans. It is reactionary democracy that is perpetuated by cheap populism, corruption, tribalism, and the vicious propaganda by the capitalists owned and controlled mass media owned.

Democracy controlled by the Kenyan pro-capitalist mass media

The mass media embodied in the present democracy is not the media Kenyans struggled for nor desire. This is despite the occasional conflicts between the government and the media, which are a consequence of the never-ending attempts of the government to control and reduce the freedom of the press enshrined in the Constitution of Kenya (2010).

Apart from Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) and its related electronic and print media that is also geared towards conserving the present status quo of capitalism, all other TV and radio stations, and newspapers are owned and controlled by rich local and foreign individuals or groups of individuals who also control political and economic power in the country. In short, the news and dissemination of information in the country are dominated and controlled by the ruling capitalist class of Kenya and their imperialist masters. Kenyan journalists and media practitioners are in the service of the capitalist and pro-imperialist ruling elite. All the talk about journalism ethics and self-regulation that is often claimed and demanded by Kenyan journalists is a gimmick because 'whoever pays the piper calls the tune.'

It is for this reason that the Kenyan media, despite all its pretences, is about conserving and perpetuating the system of capitalism in the country that has failed to solve the myriad of economic and social problems bedevilling our country. The journalists have to expound on the capitalist ideology of their masters. And since it is all about money, journalism in Kenya is part and parcel of the culture of platitudes, parochial populist politics, and corruption that exists in the country. To have a voice in the Kenyan print and electronic media you have to have money to bribe journalists and editors or sing the ideological tune of the owners of capital and the media. That is why

alternative views to bourgeoisie democracy, especially as it is practiced in Kenya, and to the capitalist social and economic system are hardly publicized or tolerated by the press. The true wishes and aspirations of the majority of Kenyans that are poor and exploited are only paid lip service by Kenyan corrupt and pro-capitalist mass media.

The Kenyan print and electronic media, for example, hardly report the meetings of CPK and other 'small' political parties that do not have money to bribe them. In this way, Kenyan political news is dominated by JUBILEE, ODM, Wiper, ANC, KANU, UDA, and Ford Kenya daily. Meetings and activities of CPK, for example, are ignored by the media that makes it seem that Kenyan political history is only made by the right-wing political parties led by millionaires and billionaires and the mafia who control the economy and state of Kenya today. The media is part and parcel of the conspiracy to kill multiparty democracy in the country in favour of few neoliberal political parties. Their mission is to ensure that Kenyans do not think out of the box of the capitalist and imperialist system by deliberately calculated misinformation and platitudes that are repeated many times so that they are regarded as truth by the stupefied public.

Yet this is hardly surprising because the main objective of the Kenyan private (and even public - media - remember KBC!) like all capitalist and imperialist media, is not to inform, educate and entertain Kenyans about freedom, culture, and social progress but to mint money and conserve the reactionary status quo. The present mass media system is best suited for the capitalists and imperialists to make money through investment in newspapers, radio, and television. Bourgeoisie democracy is full of praise for the growth of the private mass media precisely because it serves the business interests of local and foreign capitalist's interests in Kenya and the region.

Is this the mass media we struggled for and aspire for? The answer is No. This is not our mass media. It does not serve our class interests. It is not for human values, it instead works to dehumanize individuals in society. It does not fight for our freedom and liberation but is ultimately geared to enslave us through the hegemony of the ruling elite with their unbridled capitalist system and ideology. Kenyan media does not only lead us away from the democracy we fought for and desire, it also believes that bourgeoisie democracy is the alpha and omega of democracy. Yet, we know that bourgeoisie democracy is for the rich who control political and economic power, it is a democracy of exploiting and oppressing the class of the majority.

We must therefore search and struggle for alternative mass media based on the principle of participation of the masses in accessing, discussing, and disseminating information and knowledge. The alternative progressive mass media must reflect, analyse and advocate the class struggles in Kenya. It must point out the evils of capitalism and imperialism. It must fight the inhuman morals of greed, corruption, discrimination, oppression, and exploitation of person by person. The progressive alternative press must teach the oppressed and the exploited about the need to struggle to overthrow the capitalist and imperialist system. It must educate Kenyans about human values, socialism: scientific ideas, class and gender equality, national values, and principles of governance. Some progressive social media - that unfortunately is hardly accessible to the Kenyan masses - is beginning to be the alternative progressive media.

Socialist values and principles embodied in the Constitution of Kenya

The democracy that the majority of Kenyan people struggled for and desire is summarized in article 10 of the constitution of Kenya and is defined as national values and principles of governance. These are (a) patriotism, national unity, sharing and devolution of power, the rule of law, democracy and participation of the people; (b) human dignity, equity, social justice, inclusiveness, equality, human rights, non - discrimination, and protection of the marginalized; (c) good governance, integrity, transparency, and accountability and (d) sustainable development. These are noble values indeed. If they were realized they would transform Kenya and move in the development path towards socialism in line with the manifesto of CPK.

However, these values that summarize the wishes and aspirations of the majority of Kenyans are realized more in the breach than in the observance. It cannot be otherwise under the present capitalist system that is based on the values of exploitation and oppression of person by person. The argument that changing the executive government from JUBILEE to ODM or OKA or UDA will deliver progressive change towards the implementation of the national values and principles of governance is a lie and pure propaganda calculated by the ruling class and their foreign partners to create false hope among the masses to perpetuate the capitalist and imperialist system in the country. Yet, imperialist funded NGOs and 'CSOs' including religious organizations continue to disseminate this lie that the national values can be realized under the neo-colonial and capitalist system. This is not unexpected though as the NGOs, 'CSOs', and religious organizations are led by the same elites that are part and parcel of the capitalist and imperialist system.

Democracy that plants the seeds of greed and corruption

Although the Constitution of Kenya that embodies the said national values, and one of the best Bill of Rights in the world, corruption in Kenya is endemic and has increased many times fold since the constitution was promulgated. Corruption practiced by the national government and state institutions has been devolved to the county governments making a mockery of Kenyan peoples' wishes and aspiration for devolution as stipulated in article 6 and 11 of the Constitution. Corruption is practiced by leaders of the government, private sector, and non-governmental organizations, including religious organizations, with impunity. And since the ideas of the ruling class are imposed upon the rest of society, the rot of corruption has permeated the whole of Kenyan society and is consuming it as ants consume trees and structures. It has become a negative culture that is even embraced by ordinary citizens at the grassroots despite its wasteful, destructive, and poisonous effects on freedom, democracy, justice, human rights, and sustainable development.

All state organs including parliament, the executive, and judiciary have all been infected by corruption. Political leaders and civil servants amass billions of shillings' worth of wealth through corruption. Through corruption thieves, robbers, conmen and women, murderers, illicit drug barons, and mafia are now in the highest offices of the Kenyan state, often after having been elected by citizens who accept to participate corruptly in the corrupt elections supervised by corrupt officers of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries and Commission (IEBC).

So entrenched is corruption in the country that the ritual of national elections that is repeated every five years increases corruption and the number of corrupt individuals in power instead of reducing them. Institutions charged with the task of fighting corruption, including the Ethics and Anti - Corruption Commission (EACC), County and National Parliaments, Police, Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA), various constitutional commissions and state-appointed bodies, are themselves infested so much by corruption and corrupt officers that they have failed to protect Kenyans from corruption.

It is the majority of poor and exploited Kenyans who suffer the most from corruption. For example, despite the populist propaganda that is now a platitude about free primary and subsidized secondary school education, education is today so expensive that the majority of the children of the poor can hardly afford it. Thousands of students are forced to be out of school. The school fees charged by

Kenyan public schools are among the most expensive in the world. Corruption is so rife in the country that the head teachers form cartels to charge huge school fees that they do not even account for. They misappropriate public funds in the schools while ignoring the school fees structures set by the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education is unable to enforce its populist pronouncements that translate to empty talks of merely hoodwinking the public.

The Ministry of Education is unable to govern the schools and the head teachers, leaving parents and students at the mercy of the tyranny of the merciless educational professionals who violate all professional ethics to mint easy money hurting parents and the future of the children. After graduating from secondary schools, thousands of the children of the poor are unable to continue to colleges, universities, and other institutions of higher education. The unfortunate incidences of the burning of schools by students that have happened in many parts of the country is a protest of children against corruption and hopelessness in Kenya in general and Kenyan schools in particular.

Public universities have been privatized while the standard of education they offer has been compromised by the insistence of the administrators of using the institutions to mint money at any cost. Kenyan universities are so rotten with corruption that the university administrations and councils connive with gangs of students called student leaders to steal millions of money contributed by students for students' welfare. To protect and perpetuate corruption, the university administrations and councils ensure academic freedom is eliminated and the universities are governed through authoritarianism. Independent student organizations are suppressed and progressive student leaders and students are persecuted, frustrated, and expelled arbitrarily. The lecturers of the institutions of higher learning are so oppressed that they have given into the corrupt and reactionary system. They are no longer intellectuals who pursue and disseminate knowledge and freedom but individuals who are slaves of the mundane aspirations of money, greed, sycophantism, and opportunism. Instead of being trusted and creative persons, many lecturers have allowed themselves to be turned by the system into pretenders of knowledge and disseminators of platitudes and reactionary ideas.

The health sector is no better. The majority of Kenyans who cannot afford to pay for private health services suffer

and die of curable diseases because public health facilities are ravaged by corruption and therefore are unable to provide the required services. The problem is escalated by the corruption in county governments that mismanage the devolved health sector. Doctors and other medical practitioners employed in public health facilities spend more time working for private health facilities than in public health services while receiving salaries from the government every month. Medical supplies are stolen from public hospitals and sold in private hospitals, chemists, and stores.

The basis of corruption in the country is the capitalist system. Capitalism is the system of greed and the worship of money and private property, accumulation, and competition over wealth and money. No wonder the Kenyan education system is used to disseminate and perpetuate capitalist ideas and values in Kenyan society.

In this democracy, everything is privatized or being privatized

In the process of implementing neoliberal economic and social policies, the government and the ruling class which politically is led by JUBILEE, ODM, and their allies have been in a hurry to privatize the economy and social services. Privatization means transferring public property - or what belongs to all Kenyans - to local and foreign individuals, families or groups. In the process of privatization, the public is cheated that state parastatals and other public property are being privatized in the interest of the public; that they are being privatized because they are not making profits. In this way, most lucrative parastatals have now been privatized or targeted for privatization. They are sold corruptly to the rich local capitalists in government and foreign capitalists connected to the corrupt Kenyan leadership. This has escalated unemployment and poverty in society while widening the gap between the few rich and the majority poor. Today Kenya is one of the leading countries in the world in corruption and inequality.

In Kenya, the best quality services are provided by the private sector. It is therefore only the rich people who can afford good quality health, education, water, transport, housing, and communication services. All that is good, including the commons such as land, beaches, rivers, lakes, water, wildlife, and recreational facilities have also either been privatized or targeted for privatization. There is hardly any investment in cultural activities such as theatres, libraries, museums, sports, art, and music. Thus Kenyans are denied of their humanity and made to live like animals, only surviving with primitive, superstitious, and backward ideas.



Members of the CPK women league dance during their convention in Kisumu

The Kenyan economy has no place for the welfare of the majority of citizens. The citizens are forced to endure the cycle of poverty, want, and suffering. It is an economy that is planned to serve the interest of the few rich and their foreign imperialist masters, creating wealth for the few. Under the neoliberal economy, Kenya's wealth and economy are controlled by a few millionaires and billionaires who collaborate with imperialism to enslave the majority and deny them their freedom and liberation. It is this class of business cartels, bureaucratic capitalists, conmen and con-women, land and property speculators, financial oligarchies, and mafia of all sorts that also control the politics of the country through the democracy provided by the Constitution of Kenya. Annual budgets of trillions of shillings remain drab statistical figures that only serve to guide the ruling elites in power to continue enriching themselves by appropriating the wealth of the nation.

At the same time, the country is pushed deeper and deeper into debt burden. Today, Kenya has become a slave of international capital and imperialism. While the government is so broke that is unable to pay its workers, the elites display flamboyant lifestyles that testify to corruption and primitive accumulation. This is bourgeoisie democracy as it is practiced in Kenya today.

Summary and conclusion

Kenyans will repeat the ritual of electing the President, Senators, Governors, Members of Parliament, Women Members of Parliament,

and Members of County Assemblies on August 9, 2022. Despite all the talks and efforts being made by IEBC purportedly to ensure peaceful, free, and fair elections, the elections will not change the fact that this is not the democracy Kenyans struggled for, deserve, or desire. Neither is it the democracy that will change the lives of the majority of Kenyans for the better.

Successive past elections have hardly improved the lives of the majority of citizens. Bourgeois elections, however democratic they may be, will not in themselves improve the wellbeing of the masses because they are not geared to remove the capitalist system of exploitation and oppression of person by person. Bourgeois elections only serve to legitimize and perpetuate exploitation and oppression of person by person.

That is why the coming elections that are dominated by JUBILEE, ODM UDA, and parties of the OKA coalition will hardly improve the lives of the working class and poor Kenyans even when supervised by reformed IEBC. It doesn't matter which of the political parties or coalitions of the ruling class emerges as a winner. As long as they are committed to maintaining the status quo of capitalism and imperialism, Kenyans will not be liberated from poverty and underdevelopment.

Furthermore, the outcome of the elections dominated by the right-wing political parties will not implement the Constitution of Kenya because these parties benefit from the politics of corruption,



CPK cadres during a meeting in Voi

tribalism, intrigues, lies, and exploitation and oppression of person by person. Therefore, all the quarrelling we are witnessing in the mass media between the leaders and politicians of JUBILEE and ODM and their coalitions have very little to do with the interests of us - the majority Kenyans. Just like it is in the US, between the Democratic and Republican parties, it is a contest about which capitalist party or capitalist political coalition will be in power to perpetuate the capitalist and imperialist system.

The Communist Party of Kenya (CPK) is the registered progressive alternative political party in Kenya. It is committed to interpreting and implementing the Constitution of Kenya to liberate Kenya from the capitalist system and to move it towards the socialist system. CPK is aware that the democracy the Kenyan people struggled for and that they desire and aspire for as stipulated in the Constitution of Kenya is socialist democracy.

CPK struggles for the realisation of, among other things, Kenyan national values and principles of governance defined in article ten of the Constitution of Kenya : (a) patriotism, national unity, sharing and devolution of power, the rule of law, democracy, and participation of the people; (b) human dignity, equity, social justice, inclusiveness, equality, human rights, non - discrimination, and protection of the marginalized; (c) good governance, integrity, transparency, and accountability and (d) sustainable development". All these cannot be realized under the democracy of the capitalist system we have described in this article. They will be realized under the democracy of the socialist system that

CPK is inviting Kenyans to struggle for.

CPK and 2022 elections

So will the CPK participate in the coming national elections and if so for what reason? The answer is Yes! CPK will participate in the 2022 national elections for the following reasons:

1. Kenyans believe in the elections and will participate in them whether we as communists like it or not;
2. CPK will use the elections to measure the consciousness of the Kenyan masses to inform the strategies and tactics of our revolutionary struggle;
3. To continue exposing the lies of the democracy of the ruling class; and,
4. To use the elections to win whatever reforms we can that will better the welfare of the majority of Kenyans even under the present reactionary socio-political system.

All in all, CPK will never be diverted by the illusionary national elections from the path of struggling for peoples' participatory democracy: socialist democracy.

By Editors

KENYANS MUST THINK AND ELECT LEADERS FROM OUTSIDE THE BOX TO ACHIEVE GREATER DEMOCRACY, IN 2022 ELECTIONS!



CPK members during a visit to the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties

By Mwandawiro Mghanga

With humility, sincerity, and the love that I have for you as a people and nation, I wish at this time and date to remind and warn you yet again that you have been fixed in a box by the reactionary leaders of Kenya, their capitalist ideology and socio-economic system of capitalism. They use all means at their disposal, including but not limited to the press, tribalism, political meetings, and all machinery

of propaganda and control to ensure that you remain permanently fixed in the reactionary box they have deliberately designed for you to serve their interests.

Remember, however much you lament, cry, condemn, wish or pray, unless you think outside the box unless you get yourselves out of the box that you are fixed in, you will remain at their mercy: poor, exploited, oppressed, and the perpetual wretched of the earth. No sustainable positive change will happen to you

as long as you continue allowing yourselves to remain in the reactionary box deliberately designed for you by the capitalist exploiters and oppressors in power and their capitalist system and ideology.

What do I mean by angrily saying all this - and now? Kenya's national elections will be held in August 2022, but already the country is being driven in a heated election mood as if the elections will happen tomorrow. Hitherto, it has been happening that no sooner are

the elections held and concluded than the campaigns for the next one, five years away, begin immediately all over again. It is as if Kenyans eat and live on elections.

You the majority of citizens are fixed to put your minds fixed in those elections to forget the present economic and social problems that you are made to suffer from and live with by the same regime and its reactionary system. Rather than, for example, demand for immediate solutions to corruption, poverty, growing unemployment, inequality, crime, insecurity, hunger, violence, the health and social effects of the Covid - 19 pandemic, you are instead fixed to accept to continue dreaming about false promises of solutions which they lie to you will come after the 2022 national elections that dominate media reports, news and political discussions in the country today. It is as though sustainable progressive change has ever happened anywhere and in history spontaneously without a deliberate and organized struggle!

Recycling leaders

Using the same media that acts as the propaganda machine of Kenya's ruling class and their political parties, they have fixed you to choose leaders from the same box in every election. At the moment, you are again being driven to think that the 2022 President of Kenya should and must be either Raila Odinga or Musalia Mudavadi or Kalonzo Musyoka or William Ruto or Moses Wetangula or Gideon Moi or even Uhuru Kenyatta - that is if, in their handshake political intrigues, they have conspired with Raila in the form of the notorious Building Bridges Initiative (BBI) that he will remain in political power somehow after he retires from the presidency in 2022.

To fix you even more firmly in the box so that you can recycle them to power through the coming elections, they have now recycled the NASA alliance to become One Kenya Alliance (OKA). Yet it is the same chameleons changing colour to fool you as ever before! And you allow yourselves to be fooled! You pretend that you have forgotten that each of the presidential candidates you are being fixed to choose from in the box is loitering around the country promising he is best suited to deliver you from the cancer of corruption, poverty, underdevelopment, stampeding inflation, and national debt, hunger, unemployment, insecurity, economic stagnation, tribalism and a myriad of social problems facing our country today and imposed upon us by the same elites. You don't

even stand to think and ask them - especially those in OKA in charge of the government now with Uhuru Kenyatta - what is preventing them from implementing the solutions they are proposing in their campaigns here and now while they are in charge of government now?

And because you are fixed in the box deliberately designed for your manipulation, like innocent lambs, you only believe them and have even started preparing to elect a President from the same box! Only a few years ago you voted Raila, Kalonzo, Musalia, and Wetangula united as NASA Coalition to climb to political power to control you and your economy. When they were defeated by Uhuru - Ruto JUBILEE each of the leaders and their political parties pretended they were quarreling while in fact, they were scrambling for favours from President Uhuru while together looting the country and begging for eating positions. Only a few days ago they dissolved the NASA coalition pretending before you that they are political adversaries. Yet, they have brought about the OKA coalition to convince you to vote them to power without any new explanation! And yet as if you are sheep you are preparing to vote for them again in 2022. It is as if you are bewitched!

It is as though you are not aware that the said presidential candidates have completely run out of ideas of governing the country towards freedom and social progress - if they ever had any - but are also instead part and parcel of the problems confronting Kenya today and that impacts very harshly upon you, the wretched of Kenya. Don't you know that they are so enslaved by the desire to make money for themselves and their families that they hardly have any time to think about your welfare? What they care about is to make money and more money by any means at their disposal including corruption and betraying the nation; more money for hoarding and for fixing you in the box.

Don't you also remember that all of the 2022 presidential candidates from the box that are being popularized by the press every day - all of them - have been involved, implicated, mentioned, or accused of corruption and theft of public property at present or in the recent past?

Have you also forgotten that all of them were once senior leaders of the notorious and despicable Kenya African National Union (KANU) at the time when the political party was using state power to grossly violate the

freedoms and human rights of Kenyans to the level akin to that of fascism? When President Moi was arresting, torturing, detaining, imprisoning, exiling, and persecuting Kenyan patriots who were calling and struggling for multiparty democracy, political reforms, and the present Constitution of Kenya, the said 2022 presidential candidates from the box were busy turning themselves into millionaires and billionaires using the positions they then occupied in the corrupt and dictatorship regime that used to reward its sycophants with public land, plots, eating positions and other forms of property.

Corruption

You also seem not to remember that these people made the millions and billions of money and property they hold and hoard today during and beginning from the Kenyatta - Moi - KANU regime. Others are proud of inheriting stolen land, money, wealth, and even political popularity from their parents who used to wield and hold political and economic power. Today they are multiplying all this many times over while using the same political and economic power to fix you in the box to help them to continue retaining power.

Despite all of this, and since you are thinking of voting for only those inside the box, you are planning to choose a President from only among them in the 2022 elections! You are fixed to either forget or ignore history just as you ignore patriotic, honest, and good capable leaders committed to your interests during elections - just because they have not looted public money to bribe you with! And since those that ignore history are doomed to repeat it, you always end up in the cycle of poverty, suffering, economic stagnation, and underdevelopment.

National elections that are held after every five years are made to seem to be only meaningless rituals. Yet the elections are important, for they are used to legitimize successive regimes that ensure that you remain firmly fixed in the box. Were you to come out of the box and listen to us who care for you then you would use democracy to win progressive reforms and to enhance the class struggle.

All the said presidential candidates from the box being popularized by the media are capitalists. Their ideology and that of their political parties embrace the values and principles of capitalism. Capitalism is the system based on private property and



exploitation and oppression of person by person. Capitalism is the basis of the corruption, greed, and inequality that you are fixed in the box to endure. The system of the capitalist political parties in power today is for the interests of the class of the rich few and not for that of you the majority of Kenyans who are poor, marginalized, and desperate.

That is why in the National and County Parliaments of Kenya composed mainly of members of the political parties that you voted for, JUBILEE, ODM, WIPER, FORD KENYA, KANU, and ANC always make laws to increase their salaries, allowances, and other benefits for themselves and other privileged members of the society. They hardly think about legislating to improve the condition of workers, peasants, the unemployed, and those who struggle and sweat every day to merely earn a meagre living. They do not make, pass and implement policies to provide land to the landless and to eradicate slums. They pretend to fight corruption outside the Parliaments while tolerating it and even practicing it to fund their greed, lavish lifestyles and to perpetuate the tactics and strategies of fixing you in the box of recycling them as your rulers.

The lawmakers you keeping on electing also oversee the destruction of the public economy by the robbery of public enterprises and parastatals through privatisation and implementation of neoliberal economic and social policies. They hardly represent the interests of the classes of the poor and exploited who elected them. Instead, they are there to perpetuate the capitalists' status quo using the Parliaments that they have made mere talking shops or dogs with no teeth to bite. Why you are preparing to re-elect to Parliament the same political

parties, their leaders, and members and expect to see progressive change in your favour defeats all logic! Or is it perhaps because they have succeeded to lock you so tightly in the box that you are unable to think and make rational choices?

British colonialism was removed from Kenya by the armed struggle of patriots who had to endure and overcome all sorts of challenges. Thousands were arrested, detained, tortured, exiled, and forced to suffer all kinds of persecutions and humiliations by the colonialists for fighting for the freedom and liberation of this country. Others died resisting colonialism and in the course of the national liberation war. And today you, you are so fixed in the box that you cannot change government only by voting wisely! Just by only walking in a secret ballot box and casting your vote wisely and in your interest defeats you! You have accepted to be made so useless, greedy, corrupt, immoral, and stupid that you demand fifty or hundred or two hundred shillings to remain in the box!

Tribal politics

What is even worse is that you are fixed in tribal-based politics of divide and rule if you choose the 2022 President from the box. You know of this very well but you choose to encourage and support tribalism that always wasted many of your lives and threatens to destroy Kenya's nationhood!

You let them move around your home counties and ethnic groups addressing you; "This is the time for the Luhya to produce the President of Kenya", says Musalia and Wetangula to their tribal henchmen and women and you a Mluhya common man or woman fixed in the box yell

and clap with happiness! At the same time Gideon Moi tells the Kalenjin the same, Kalonzo tells the Kamba the same and Raila tells the Luo the same. Their supporters repeat the same politics of tribalism meant to use you to vote them to power for their class interests that are never the same as yours.

Then the 2022 presidential candidates meet as a class - as they are doing now while plotting another coalition for fixing you in the box in the 2022 elections - in their exclusive clubs somewhere in Kenya to negotiate about the tribal alliances in preparation for the elections. In the negotiations, they share the State eating positions that they will use to get you fixed in the box to vote for them. Then you, who are fixed in the box, are made to choose the tribalism and intrigue-driven political coalitions they are forming.

Kenya is made up of over seventy ethnicities but the tribal blockings that they use for negotiations are those from the largest ethnicities. Since they have fixed you to believe that elections are about numbers, they who are tribal chauvinists conspire to manipulate and use other Kenyan ethnicities that they have fixed in the box to add to their numbers, for they have fixed you to accept to be regarded as mere numbers and voting machines.

In their tribe-based presidential bids, they don't give a damn about a nation called Kenya or national interests or even you that they have fixed in their tribalism box even though you don't belong to their tribal class. What they care about is their class interests and how they can use the tactics of divide and rule to fix you in the box so that you continue helping them to perpetuate their class system, rule, and interests that are opposite to those of yours and your class.

You see, even though you speak the same mother tongue, even though you come from the same geographical or political location, even though you are blood relatives and even though you are fixed to believe that you are from the same clan or ethnicity with them, the truth of the matter is that you are not the same ethnicity and will never be as long as the class divisions remain in the country.

Yes, as long as Kenya is divided into classes as it is today there will always be two ethnicities, their ethnicity and your/our ethnicity, the ethnicity of the few and that of the majority, the ethnicity of the rich and that of the poor, of the exploited and the exploiters, of the capitalists and the workers and working classes. Ignoring or doubting this truth means being fixed in the box until one day you wake up from the slumber, or you are somehow made to gain consciousness after being exploited and oppressed for too long by them.

Kikuyu and Kalenjin poverty

Remember, Jomo Kenyatta was the first President of Kenya and he was a Kikuyu by ethnicity. Yet it is the ethnicity of the rich Kikuyus and the ethnicity of rich non-Kikuyus who benefited the most from his primitive accumulation capitalist leadership. The majority of Kikuyus remain as poor and oppressed as other poor and oppressed Kenyans from other ethnicities. They remain squatters and slum dwellers.

Neither did the lives of the poor, exploited, and oppressed Kalenjins become better than those of other poor, exploited, and oppressed Kenyans from other ethnicities just because Moi became President after Kenyatta. Also, the Kikuyu poor, exploited and oppressed people do not

live better than the poor, exploited, and oppressed Kenyans from other ethnicities just because the two successive Presidents, Kibaki and Uhuru have come from the box of the Kikuyu ethnicity.

You see, you are fixed in your ethnicity during elections and only for the interests of the common exploiters and oppressors of the majority of Kenyans. Otherwise, after elections and in times of peace and tranquillity, there is no Kikuyu or Kalenjin or Luo or Somali ethnicity. There are only two ethnicities, the ethnicity of the exploiting Kenyans and that of the exploited Kenyans, irrespective of the mother tongues they speak. Each ethnicity, regardless of the languages they speak and the religions they practice retreats to their ethnic-class spaces that they occupy in Kenya and to their lifestyles and cultures conditioned by the capitalist system. In Nairobi, for example, the ethnicity of the rich from all ethnicities live in the exclusive suburbs of Muthaiga, Karen, Runda, Lavington, etc., while the poor and wretched from all ethnicities of the country are dumped by the system to suffer and suffocate at Kibera, Mathare, Kawangare, Mukuru, etc. slums.

Yet the ethnicity of the rich fixes you so much in the box of tribalism during elections that you imagine that you belong to their ethnicity! They poison and manipulate you so much that they make you hate your ethnicity who speak a different mother tongue from yours and who is your neighbour, friend, and even relative. They poison and fix you in the box so much that you become mad and hate and slaughter persons of your ethnicity occupying the same space with you but speaking different mother tongues from yours, especially during the elections.

If you are not careful, the 2022 presidential candidates will nail you so firmly in the box that you will forget your ethnicity yet again and start hating and killing members of your class ethnicity - just by you foolishly thinking that you are of the same ethnicity with those who belong to the class of the rich just because they speak the same mother tongue as you!

Looming danger

I can read the signs and they don't augur well! All this handshake politics appears to be nonsense to me and to be full of political lies and intrigues. All this talk of the breakage of the NASA Coalition and the formation of OKA with the only agenda being the presidential ambitions of Deputy President William Ruto is another dangerous gimmick that is aimed at pulling you towards the politics of their reactionary tribes and the negative consequences thereof.

OKA is just another tool of fixing you to serve certain class tribal-based political interests. The 2022 presidential candidates are roaming all over the country whipping up and mobilizing tribal sentiments among you and you are entering the box that may consume you in blood. They bank on the fact that you are already confusing their ethnicity to be your ethnicity while forgetting your class ethnicity and your class ethnic interests. The heritage of mother tongues complicates class and class struggles among you in the box. In their tribe, it is being said that they are plotting to assassinate one another in the fierce 2022 presidential campaigns. If you are not careful you in the box may be sucked in the bloody political war that will not be in your interests; that of your class ethnicity and the national interest.

When they talk about handshake and BBI, it does not mean that they want to shake hands with you or build bridges with you or between you just because you are in the box cheering them to power. Remember “mpanda ngazi na mshuka ngazi hawawezi kushikana mikononi!”

After you have elected them and their political parties to the national and county Parliaments, who do they go ahead and nominate to County, National, and Senate Parliaments? Certainly not you in the box from the ethnicity of the poor of Kenya. ODM, JUBILEE, WIPER, FORD KENYA, KANU, and ANC political parties nominate their brothers, sisters, wives, girlfriends, and class friends. And what of political appointments for state jobs? Of course, the same. The political parties in power single out for appointments of top civil servants, parastatals, and ambassadors mainly from their blood relatives and class tribes whether men or women. This is how they perpetuate the status quo of their class rule.

To them, you from the working classes in the box and who tear each other apart in your ethnicity, especially during the elections as you did in 2007/8 and repeated in 2017, thinking you belong to the same ethnicity with them, they use and dump you in the dust bin of poverty, marginalization, suffering, and backwardness where you will belong to until the next elections or until and unless you get yourselves out of the box. For to them, you in the box are mere election statistics and voting machines, and nothing else.

Attack on multi-party system

And if you are not aware of this, you are still in the box, let me remind you: they even set aside billions of shillings every year from the national budgets to use to fix you in the box! In other words, they are using your taxes to fix you in the box of the mentally tired and redundant leadership and their reactionary capitalist political system of exploitation and oppression of person by person. This is money that in the spirit of the Constitution of Kenya was meant to build the culture of multiparty democracy in Kenya. The Political Parties Act of 2007 ensured that the money was shared among all the registered political parties.

But later the right-wing political parties and coalitions in Parliament today feared the robust growth of the culture of multiparty democracy that they believe is a threat to their neoliberal capitalist system at present and in the future. Although the Constitution stipulates that Kenya is a multiparty democracy, the political parties in power advocate for few political parties that maintain the capitalists' status quo of capitalism and neo-colonialism like those in the UK and USA.

Thus JUBILEE and ODM with their OKA coalition partners Wiper, FORD KENYA, KANU, and ANC conspired to change the Political Parties Act to ensure that the billions of shillings budgeted for political parties are grabbed by the ruling political parties of the rich to use them to fix you in the box of retaining you as perpetual voters of maintaining the capitalist system and leadership in power. With this illegal arrangement in their favour they use your taxes to ensure that you from the tribe of workers and peasants will only remain voters but will never yourselves be elected to Parliament. They also fix you in the box with your own money to use you and your votes to block those patriots and revolutionaries like the

Communist Party of Kenya (CPK) who fight for your interests and against their political parties from coming to power.

I am reminding you of all this you fixed in the box so that you are also aware that the money they use to bribe you to elect them to power during the elections is your own money. They use your own money to fix you as slaves in the slavery box that they have designed and made for you. You are so fixed in their box that when we tell you this truth you don't listen to us. Or you pretend you know and claim it's not true. You ignore us and accept to sell your dignity, humanity, and freedom for fifty, hundred, or two hundred shillings! And no sooner have you elected them to Parliament through corruption and stupidity than you start lamenting and condemning them the very next day for forgetting you and for practicing corruption and for making you suffer in poverty, exploitation, and oppression! You see, you the poor and the exploited citizens have been manufactured as hypocrites and enemies of your class interests by the capitalist system.

Yes, unless you get yourselves out of the capitalism illusive box that you are fixed in you will remain in your life of poverty, suffering, backwardness, and hopelessness. We shall continue reminding you that capitalism always benefits few people in society while leaving the majority to wallow and languish in the quagmire of perpetual poverty, want, suffering and underdevelopment.

Liberation formula

However much you lament, wish, pray or vote you will remain that way until you liberate yourselves and come out of the box of capitalism and its ever-elusive democracy. To come out of the box means that you must identify your class ethnicity and interests, unite and remember that you are a human being that must not accept to continue living in the box made for you by capitalism, neo-colonialism, and the current leaders of Kenya who only care about themselves, their families and class interests and ethnicity. Getting yourselves out of the box means refusing the present political, economic, and social arrangements imposed upon you by the ruling class and their state machine. It means struggling against the capitalist system. It means listening to and working with those like the Communist Party of Kenya (CPK) who are committed to struggle with you to liberate you and the whole society from capitalism and imperialism.

The capitalist system that up to today is imposed upon you has been in Kenya since colonial times. It is the system that was brought to Kenya by European colonialism around 1885 and imposed upon the Kenyan people and communities many of which were at one stage or another of mature communalism mode defined by Julius Nyerere as Ujamaa, which he also considered to be the basis of African socialism.

Colonialism fought and eventually destroyed the communal social relations of equality, social justice, solidarity, and common ownership of the basic means of production, land. Capitalist socio-economic relations based on private property and exploitation and oppression of person by person were violently imposed upon Africans. Colonial capitalism was used by the European settlers and rulers to rob Kenyans of their land, property, exploit their labour, denying them their freedom and human rights, and destroy their cultures based on communal values. The seeds of class inequality existing in the country today and embraced by the leadership in power and that fixes you in the box of the capitalist system were planted and nurtured by colonialism.

The leaders of the ruling classes of Kenya and their political parties, whether JUBILEE, ODM, WIPER, ANC, FORD KENYA, KANU - OKA coalition, and their press and intellectuals who impose the capitalist system upon you and your class ethnicity will never liberate you from exploitation and oppression because they are exploiters and oppressors who worship the capitalist God of private property, accumulation and money. They are beneficiaries of the inhuman system that drives the vast majority of Kenyans to live the life of poverty, suffering, and backwardness which is unworthy of human beings. I repeat however many times you elect them and their political parties and coalitions to power they will never change your conditions for the better. Instead, they will continue to grow richer and richer by stealing public money and property while you continue sinking deeper and deeper in the quagmire of poverty, suffering, debt burden, dependency, and underdevelopment.

Yet, while you are in the box you believe them when they pretend that they are fighting corruption. But the truth of the matter is that they embrace the mother of all corruption, capitalism! What can be more corrupt than the system that advocates for private property, class division, and exploitation of person by person? What is more corrupt than a system, leadership, and political parties that allow few individuals and families to grab, own and retain tens and hundreds of thousands of acres of land throughout the country while millions of people are landless and are forced to live as squatters and in slums in rural and urban areas? They accumulate millions and billions of shillings when the majority of Kenyans cannot save even a shilling and are unable to afford food, house rent, and medicine or pay school fees for their children.

The ethnicity of the ruling class lives in castles in their exclusive beautiful and environmentally friendly suburbs in rural and urban areas while you in the ethnicity of the poor and exploited are made to dwell in ugly and dirty hovels that are unfit for human habitation... and this is not called corruption! They are not even ashamed to drive their posh cars on dirty and dilapidated roads and streets full of potholes in all urban areas surrounded by slums. The leaders you keep on listening to every day and keep on electing and re-electing to power every time consider this system as normal and just while calling it civilization and democracy! Yet you in the box believe and support them and their capitalist system as though you are condemned by fate! As if you are not human beings!

CPK alternative

The Communist Party of Kenya (CPK) was formed and registered to struggle against the capitalist system in theory and practice. We are patriots and revolutionaries engaged in the battle of ideas with those who impose capitalism and imperialism upon our country and World, the systems which fix you the majority of Kenyans and humanity in the box of reaction. CPK believes that there can never be true liberation, freedom, peace, and sustainable human security in our country and World as long as capitalism and imperialism dominate the world. Our planet Earth is itself threatened with destruction and disappearance as long as the capitalist and imperialist systems continue to dominate the World and impose values and practices of exploitation and oppression of person by person and of nation by nation, of competition over markets, of greed, of grabbing, of looting and plundering and destroying natural resources and the environment, of war and of stockpiling weapons of mass destruction.

Members of CPK will never accept to be locked in the box or to remain silent, unconcerned, and inactive while capitalism and its ideology stand in the way of human freedom, liberation, and development. CPK will vigorously perform its historical role in this part of the World called Kenya in the battle against capitalism and imperialism. In this just and progressive struggle we are together and in solidarity with our class ethnicities of Africa and the World for the struggle against capitalism and imperialism is global. CPK is part and parcel of the international anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist united front.

CPK is committed to the realization of the national values and principles of governance stipulated in article ten in the Constitution of Kenya. They are part of the values and principles of socialism that you today fixed in the box wished for yourselves and Kenya but are deliberately violated by the capitalists in power with impunity.

The implementation of the socialist national values and principles would put the country along a sustainable development path that will benefit all citizens and move our country towards freedom and liberation and social progress.

Kenya has enough human and natural resources to enable all citizens to participate in the development process and to realize the economic and social rights stipulated by the Constitution of Kenya and which are also part and parcel of the minimum demands of CPK. If the annual national budget of three trillion and six hundred billion shillings were to be implemented honestly, prudently, equitably, efficiently, and progressively each year to realize the intended goals of national planned development, the country would alleviate and ultimately eradicate poverty, gross inequality, and underdevelopment within a few years. Every year you people would witness the construction of more and more decent public houses and development of transport infrastructure including roads, rail, air, and water transport. The government would be able to provide adequate food, education, health services, water, electricity, employment, and social security to all Kenyans as stipulated in article 43 of the Constitution of Kenya concerning economic and social rights.

The Constitution of Kenya is progressive in many ways and could be used to bring about many progressive reforms even within the current capitalist system. CPK believes in progressive reforms that are aimed at improving the welfare of the exploited and oppressed even while being aware that true freedom and liberation of society will ultimately only be realized when the capitalist system is replaced by the historically higher, progressive, and humane socialist system.

But JUBILEE, ODM, WIPER, ANC, FORD KENYA, KANU, and their OKA political coalitions do not make the necessary laws for the implementation of the progressive aspects of the Constitution that will improve your present conditions. And when they do they end up deliberately making contradictory laws that they implement more in the breach than in the observance. Capitalists in power everywhere will always interpret and implement constitutions to serve their class interests that are against that of majority exploited and oppressed citizens of their countries.

And now as they prepare to form the so-called One Kenya Alliance (OKA) - yet another capitalist political force to mobilize you in the box to vote to maintain them in political power in 2022 -, they are

organising using the notorious, unpopular illegal, and dead Building Bridges Initiative (BBI) created by President Uhuru and ODM leader Raila Odinga to make you participate in the process of creating ruling and eating positions for themselves and their class.

The BBI constitutional amendments, if you ever vote for them in the referendum they are planning, will be mainly about power and position sharing and not about wealth sharing, nation-building, and empowering you the majority poor and exploited Kenyans to participate in the affairs of your country as equal citizens and human beings. The leaders and their political parties and coalitions are united in changing the Constitution to perpetuate themselves and their class in power and to strengthen their bourgeoisie democracy that is always elusive to you the majority working class, poor and marginalized.

Call to action

That is why CPK calls upon you to come out of the box and join us in the struggle for socialism. CPK is a vanguard political party that seeks to unite all progressive and patriotic political parties, mass organizations, civil society, movements and other popular formations to struggle for the liberation of Kenya from the present capitalist system that prevents the freedom, development, liberation, and social progress of our country.

CPK does not believe in utopian socialism but in scientific socialism that will be spearheaded by a vanguard party, guided by the ideology of Marxism-Leninism applied in the concrete material and historical conditions of Kenya. Socialism will come through class struggle led by revolutionary organisations and popular formations, workers, and the allies of the working class.

We are, therefore, today as ever before committed to mobilizing Kenyan workers, peasants, and all the progressive and popular forces to join us in the frontline of the struggle for participatory democracy and socialism. CPK is conscious of the fact that freedom, liberation, and socialism cannot happen spontaneously. That is why we deliberately came together to organize and register CPK to consciously organise the working classes and the masses of Kenya to carry out this struggle.

CPK expands and stretches the democratic gains and space won by Kenyans hitherto towards establishing the society envisioned by article ten and other progressive articles of the Constitution of Kenya that embody the spirit, wishes, and aspirations of the majority of citizens, socialism. CPK is conscious of the fact that realizing these wishes and aspirations of the majority of Kenyans will not happen without sacrifices and bitter class struggles. CPK invites you to come out of the box and join us in this class struggle whose ultimate objective is to realize and establish socialism and a socialist state in Kenya.

Getting out of the box means and must mean refusing to be used by the reactionary leaders and their political parties and coalitions to elect and re-elect them to power so that they continue to exploit and oppress you while betraying our country and pushing us deeper and deeper in the quagmire of poverty, debt burden, dependency, and underdevelopment. It means rejecting being used by the so-called BBI formation of Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila Odinga that is plotting to change the Constitution to share political and state positions among themselves and their class and to perpetuate the neo-colonial capitalist system.

Getting out of the box is joining, supporting, and working with CPK to struggle to amend the Constitution - through the popular participation of all citizens - to consolidate and conserve its progressive content won by the masses of Kenya hitherto while demanding for more and more socialist content. It is refusing to be divided, led, exploited, oppressed, robbed, and oppressed along tribal lines.

In other words, getting out of the box is waking up from the slumber in the box. It means putting an end to the sitting, lamenting, praying, wishing, and expecting that progressive change will somehow emerge from the blues! Instead, it is joining us to work for, organize for, unite for and struggle for progressive and revolutionary change. It is never forgetting that progressive and revolutionary change will and must inevitably lead to socialism.

Getting yourself out of the box is asserting your humanity. It is remembering that you are a human being: an independent, conscious, creative social being. For to be a communist is the highest attribute of a human being.



Comrade Kinuthia Ndung'u in red T-Shirt with youths from Kasarani

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WHY WE CHANGED FROM SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (SDP) TO COMMUNIST PARTY OF KENYA (CPK)



CPK cadres at the Solidarity House

As the 2022 national elections approach, our party is receiving questions from the public about why we changed our name from the Social Democratic Party of Kenya (SDP) to the Communist Party of Kenya (CPK). In this edition of Itikadi, we publish the speech by the Chairperson of CPK that answers this important question.

THE CHAIRPERSON'S SPEECH ON THE THIRD NATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF KENYA (SDP) TRANSFORMED INTO COMMUNIST PARTY OF KENYA (CPK), AT RIVERSIDE, NAIROBI, DECEMBER 5, 2019

Revolutionary greetings to all delegates gathered here! Happy New Year!

Today we have made the historical decision of changing the name of our party from Social Democratic Party of Kenya (SDP) to Communist Party of Kenya (CPK). This is a significant decision with great implications not only to our party but also to Kenya and the East African Community. No communist party has ever been registered in Kenya and the East African Community apart from South Sudan.

Yet, many more important reasons made us decide to abandon the name SDP and opt for the name CPK. These include the following;

We are registered as a communist party except that for historical reasons based on the origin of the party we retained the name Social Democratic Party of Kenya (SDP). The documents of SDP: the manifesto, constitution, charter, code of conduct, msimamo wa SDP, and the official statements put on the website of SDP all show that we are committed to socialism and communism and are far away from social democratic reactionary ideas and politics. In fact, in our international associations, comrades from all over the world that we often interacted with have always wondered about the contradictions of

the name of our party and clear ideological commitment to socialism. So today we end this contradiction by calling our party its true name that explains our actual ideology, vision, and commitment: Communist Party of Kenya (CPK).

We are ready to enter the battle of ideas in Kenya and the world as CPK. Let the capitalists, imperialists, opportunists, and oppressors of all sorts who day and night seeking to maintain the reactionary order of exploitation of person by person tremble: CPK has been born today and is here to stay!

The name social democracy is used by reformers and opportunists to confuse the working class and the oppressed people, distort and water down their struggle for true liberation and freedom. Social democratic parties in the world have long abandoned communism and are part and parcel of neoliberalism, neocolonialism, and imperialism. In this way, they differ only in form but not in content to bourgeoisie political parties that advocate capitalism overtly all the time. Social democratic parties fight against communism that struggles to organize the working class and oppressed classes to



destroy the capitalist system of exploitation and oppression of person by person. The Social democrats are for class conciliation while communists are for class struggle. Communists are committed to the struggle of overthrowing the capitalist system, annihilating it, and replacing it with the socialist system and ultimately communist system of true liberation, freedom, equality, justice, and peace on earth.

By abandoning our past name SDP we are distinguishing our party from the many registered political parties in Kenya - including the ruling coalitions of JUBILEE and CORD led by hypocrites in power that, despite their commitment to maintaining the capitalist and imperialist system, still refer to themselves as social democratic parties. Knowing that capitalism is an evil and reactionary ideology and system they choose not to identify with it openly but instead choose to hide behind social democracy while adhering to capitalism. We will not accept to be namesakes with reactionaries and their anti-people policies!

We are the Communist Party of Kenya because we want to destroy the neocolonial capitalist system that makes a few families and individuals control the largest portion of the land and wealth of our country while the majority languish in poverty and underdevelopment.

From now onwards by name, by politics, by ideology, by actions, and by our name CPK we shall distinguish ourselves and struggles from the parties of reaction and reforms. Let our friends and foes in Kenya and the world understand us as such: CPK. Let those who are scared of communism tremble wherever they are! In the meantime, CPK calls upon workers, peasants and all the oppressed people of Kenya and the World to unite against capitalism and imperialism as they have nothing to lose but their chains.

Today, we have changed our name to CPK to declare that we are ready to face the great challenge of struggling and working towards becoming communists and a communist party. For we must beware that we do not become communists and a communist party merely by declaring that we are today registered as CPK in this National Congress. Declaring ourselves CPK means coming out of this Conference committed to the task of working to make us as individuals and party communists. This is not an easy task but we have committed ourselves to it today, but also starting from yesterday. In the course of building the new party, which is unique in our country and region, a lot will be demanded from

the leadership of CPK and its members. We must fulfill definite tasks to start being communists and CPK.

What then are some of the tasks of making ourselves and the party communist? It means among other things: (a) Studying as an individual and in groups the ideological documents of CPK; (b) Studying the communist ideology as an individual and in groups and applying it to our struggles in Kenya and in the world today; (c) Being committed to CPK in theory and practice including paying membership dues regularly, material support to the party where possible and making sacrifices for the party when required; (d) recruiting new members to the party; (e) belonging to party study circles, cells, branches and organizations and establishing party cells, branches and organizations; (f) attending party meetings without fail on time; (g) carrying out party tasks faithfully, diligently and promptly; (h) being active in mass organizations in work places, villages and wherever people gather and educating them about the party and socialism through personal examples; (i) always identifying with the oppressed and just and progressive struggles in Kenya, Africa and the world; (j) making individual initiatives of building the party and disseminating communist ideas; (k) fighting against superstitious ideas and trying to understand the universe, life and nature in the universe; (m) remembering that a human being is an independent, conscious, creative social being; (n) identifying progressive struggles in the world and providing them with material and moral support.

Communists build the communist party and the communist party builds communists. Therefore, all members of CPK must be leaders in their units, cells branches, and all party organs. Those members who grow in leadership in the lower organs of the party will be identified and promoted to higher organs. Those in higher organs who fail or refuse to grow will be demoted to lower organs.

Key decisions of the party will be made through the method of democratic centralism. This means that higher organs will identify or gather issues and convey them to the lower organs for debate or discussion. After thorough discussions or debates, the lower organs will forward their views to the higher organs. After receiving and considering the views from the lower organs, the highest organ of the party will make its decision and forward it to the lower organs not for debate or discussion but implementation. This will be the party democracy of CPK.

Long live CPK!
Long live socialism and communism!

National Chairperson of CPK

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MARTYRDOM OF COMRADE GONZALO

Dr. Abimael Guzman (Comrade Gonzalo), chairman of the Communist Party of Peru aged 86, was martyred early morning on 11th September 2021 in the high-security prison in the Calao naval base by the fascist regime in power in Peru. Comrade Gonzalo remained in isolation since his arrest on 12th September 1992. Following his famous speech on 24 September 1992 he was condemned to life imprisonment and since then for 29 years has remained in a grave-like prison without any contact with the outside world.

The 29 years of isolation and torture and final execution of the comrade in the hands of the fascist regime in Peru is a solid reminder of the class hatred of the bourgeoisie against the people and their representatives, the proletarian fighters. They suspend and reject all international conventions and protocols of human rights political prisoners and prisoners of war. Comrade Gonzalo, despite his age never gave up and resisted the persistent torture and inhumane treatment by the ruling classes in Peru.

Comrade Guzman spent all his adult life in the service of the proletariat resisting imperialism and reaction. He led the struggle against Khrushchevite modern revisionism in Peru in the mid-1960s aiming to re-establishing the Communist Party of Peru in continuation of the teachings of comrade José Carlos Mariátegui and the founder of the Communist Party of Peru, which was established in 1928. He led the re-establishment of the Communist Party of Peru and advocated the view that "the fight against revisionism and opportunism is inseparable from the fight against Imperialism and reaction".

As a representative of the party, he travelled several times to China taking notes and learning from the experiences of the Communist Party of China (CPC) under the leadership of comrade Mao Tse-tung. He travelled to China in early 1967, during the January Storm in Shanghai, and was immensely inspired by the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) and Mao Tse-tung's teaching. He defended Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought, on his return to Peru and was determined to fully realise the rupture from revisionism and the "Peruvian Communist Party" that had sunk deeper in modern revisionism betraying the proletariat and the principals of Marxism-Leninism and was colluding with imperialism and reactionaries.

The ultimate revolutionary rupture and challenge came with the launch of armed struggle on 17 May 1980, which was aimed at advancing and launching a full-scale peoples' war against the Peruvian puppet state as a strategy to advance the New Democratic Revolution in Peru.

Comrade Gonzalo was one of the first Marxist-Leninists-Maoist to raise the evaluation of comrades Mao's contribution to the proletarian science as a new higher stage of Marxism and upheld and defended Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

By 1990 the peoples' war had advanced so widely that the capital Lima was under threat of capture by the revolutionary forces led by the party. The imperialist powers and reactionaries watched in horror as the proletariat and the oppressed peoples of the world heard the revolutionary voice of liberation from Ayacucho.

Comrade Gonzalo and his comrades were captured on 12 September 1992 in Lima. On September 24, undeterred and with revolutionary zeal, Comrade Gonzalo delivered a fiery speech transmitted across the world through mainstream media. In his inspirational speech, he declared his arrest was "just a bend in the road" for the revolution and called on his comrades and the international proletarian forces to continue and to advance the struggle against imperialism and all reactionaries.



Today as we mourn the death of comrade Gonzalo and extend our heartfelt sorrow to the Communist Party of Peru (CPP) and the workers and the toiling masses of Peru, we declare that comrade Gonzalo will continue to live in our struggles.

**The Memory of President Gonzalo Lights Our Way!
Comrade President Gonzalo is Immortal!
Communist Party of Turkey – Marxist Leninist (TKP-ML)
Central Committee
September 13, 2021**



“The ultimate revolutionary rupture and challenge came with the launch of armed struggle on 17 May 1980, which was aimed at advancing and launching a full-scale peoples’ war against the Peruvian puppet state as a strategy to advance the New Democratic Revolution in Peru”

REMEMBERING THE HISTORY OF STRUGGLE FOR REVOLUTIONARY STRENGTH TO FORGE AHEAD



The late Wahome Mutahi aka Whispers

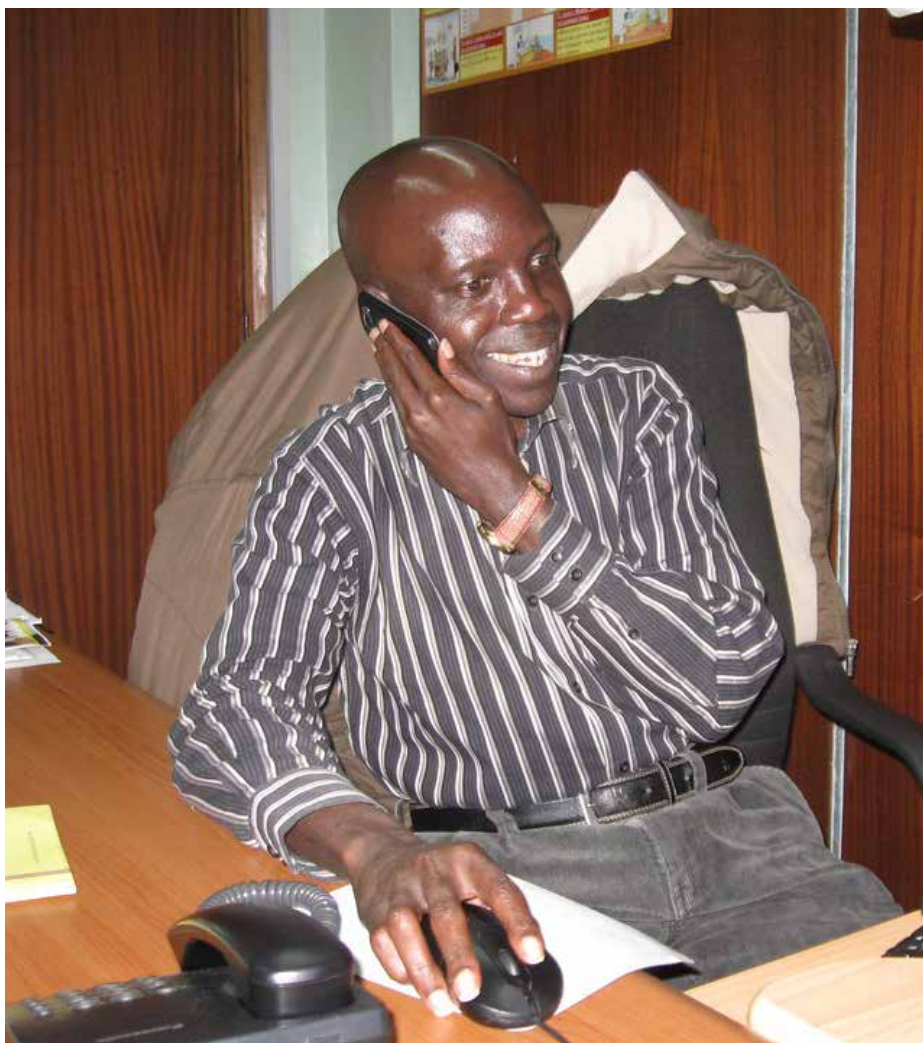
By Mwandawiro Mghanga

Even as we continue with the struggle for social and national liberation, it is always important to remember the history of our struggle, the commitments we made, the battles we fought, the challenges we faced, our achievements hitherto and to pay homage to our comrades - the heroes of the struggle - who fell along the way. Then we gain strength and stand to consolidate the gains of our struggle hitherto. This provides us with hope and the renewed vigour of forging ahead. This is because the struggle is not yet over but continues and must continue until our country, world, and humanity is liberated from capitalism, imperialism, and all systems of exploitation and oppression of person by person.

We remember that when foreigners invaded our country many centuries ago to colonise our country, starting with the Arabs and then the Portuguese, our patriotic heroes did not submit and surrender. Rather they always resisted defending our dignity as human beings, as Africans, and the right to freedom and nationhood.

The invasion and foreign domination of Arabs and Portuguese met the determined resistance of our patriots and heroes at the coast of Kenya. Our ancestors resisted by all means at their disposal. Resistance was not on a silver platter. It meant determination, commitment, hard work of organising and mobilising, taking risks, arming themselves, and engaging the enemies in ideological contests and armed combat. This demanded courage and calculated bravery, resilience, and sacrifices for the cause.

But not all of our forefathers and mothers were ready to volunteer to engage in the struggle or to be at the forefront. As matter of fact, not everyone was in the resistance struggle. It was only the best among them, those with high human values, the patriots and revolutionary heroes, who moved to the frontline to courageously lead the resistance struggle. Many were afraid of being at the forefront of the struggle or even participating in it. They were afraid of the risks involved that included torture, imprisonment, and death. Worse still, others even sold their souls to the enemies and became traitors of the resistance struggle against their people and freedom. They openly or in secret moved to the side of the enemies of our country and people for being cowards and for purely narrow, parochial, and selfish interests. But the heroes of the resistance struggled on knowing that the resistance was for the interest of all our



The late Odindo Opiata

people that were invaded and dominated by the foreign invaders and occupiers, including the cowards and traitors themselves.

The heroes of the resistance paid huge prices for their heroic actions. They were arrested, tortured, imprisoned, exiled, and persecuted in many ways. They paid heavy prices indeed, including with their flesh and blood. Despite all this, they sustained the resistance for centuries. They identified the problem then and took the actions of implementing their historical determined acts. This is why we remember them and refer to them as peoples' heroes. Because of their patriotic and heroic deeds, today we celebrate them proudly and the fact that thanks to them our people have a rich and proud history of resisting foreign domination. So the sacrifices made by the patriots and heroes then were not in vain.

When British colonialism invaded our country starting from about 1885, it met resistance from patriots of the various ethnic groups of our country. At the time, a united Kenya did not exist. However, various nationalities lived in this country in various geographical locations we now call the Republic of Kenya. Wherever the colonialists went they were resisted culturally, politically, and militarily by patriots of the various ethnic groups. Their presence, religion, culture, government, occupation, and propaganda was resisted throughout the country. Colonialists and colonialism were never welcomed anywhere in our country. Rather it was imposed through colonial tricks, state terrorism, and Christian religious cultural propaganda and violence. Yet it took about thirty-five years before the British succeeded to defeat our forefathers' and mothers' resistance to establish the unpopular colonial state in 1920 that made Kenya a British colony.

The British succeeded to colonise Kenya because they had superior weapons and state power and also because Kenya was then composed of an amalgamation of diverse ethnic groups that resisted colonialism each alone in its geographical location and ethnic cocoons. In fighting to establish colonialism in Kenya the British employed the tactics of divide and rule. But by the time colonialism was established in the country, Kenya composed of various ethnic groups was transformed into the nation we call Kenya today.

The establishment of British colonialism in Kenya did not mean the end of the resistance struggle of the Kenyan patriots. Neither did it mean that Kenyan patriots had given in to the colonial state and surrendered their nationhood to the foreign occupation. On the contrary, the British were always reminded by the conscious resistance and struggle of Kenyans that Kenya belonged to Africans who would never accept colonialism or foreigners ruled forever.

The resistance and struggle of Kenyan patriots against colonialism took various forms. Kenyans rebelled against paying taxes to the colonial government. They also resisted forced labour including that of the building of the Uganda Railway as Kenya Railway was called then. In the names of their ancestral religions and cultures, they refused to be converted to Christianity and to be brainwashed to abandon their languages and cultures through colonial education. They resisted being made to carry colonial passes - vipande - that humiliated the Black people and their freedom of movement, assembly, and association in their own country. They rebelled against colonial laws. They resisted working for White settlers who had stolen their lands and who always practiced racism and apartheid. They resisted being made to believe that the White people are superior to the Black people. At no time was colonialism allowed to be imposed and exist peacefully in our country.

From 1920 to the middle of the 1940s Kenyans resisted colonialism through somewhat peaceful means including worker's strikes, street demonstrations in urban and rural areas, and petitions to the colonial authorities in Kenya and Britain. However, the peaceful resistance was always suppressed violently by the brutal and arrogant British colonial state machine. Kenyans were arrested, tortured, imprisoned, exiled, humiliated, shot, and killed for demanding their human rights, freedom, and independence peacefully. Kenyans kept on learning that the colonial government, constitution, laws, police, army, prisons, democracy, and religion were all instruments of the colonial state machine of terror, coercion, and violence of imposing colonialism upon Kenyans.

It was becoming clearer and clearer to the exploited and oppressed Kenyans that they would never win their freedom and national independence through peaceful means or through only lamenting about the

harsh conditions imposed upon them, praying and pleading for mercy from the merciless colonial oppressors. Gradually they came to learn that freedom needed the determined unity of all oppressed Kenyans and deliberate organisation for political and military action whose ultimate objective was to capture state power from the colonialists. In fact, towards the end of the 1940s Kenyan patriots were organising military actions against the colonial state and all it stood for. The Land and Freedom Army (Mau Mau) and Movement had been organized, established, and began the war of national liberation.

The war of national liberation was hard, long, and protracted and demanded a lot of sacrifices from patriots and the masses of workers and peasants in rural and urban areas. Organising and mobilising people and resources for the Mau Mau was hard and dangerous but necessary work that had to be done by the leaders at whatever cost. Often many militants were arrested by the enemy and were tortured during the interrogations, detained, and executed.

Living in the forests of Aberdares and Mount Kenya meant enduring hunger, cold weather, loneliness, and threats from dangerous wild animals. Underground struggle demanded in rural and urban areas involved taking risks of arrests, torture, imprisonment, and arbitrary execution by the enemy. Then there was the oppression organized by the colonial state of punishing entire villages that were turned into fascist-like detention camps and torture prisons of large populations, especially in Central Province. It was never easy for the patriots who offered themselves as soldiers of the peoples' national liberation war and movement that was fought for about ten years until around 1960 when the British were forced to surrender and give in and Kenya gained national independence. The national independence was won by the sacrifices of the flesh and blood of our ancestors who today we remember proudly as Kenya's national heroes.

But, of course, not all Kenyans fought for independence. Not all were patriots. Some were on the side of the colonial exploiters and oppressors. Many colonial chiefs collaborated with colonialism as also many Christian church leaders. There were even Kenyans who were employed in the colonial civil service, police, secret police, prison guards, army and served the colonial system with great vigour and enthusiasm - against the freedom fighters and the masses! During the struggle against colonialism they acted as propaganda machines of the colonialists preaching the ideology of defeatism that colonialism was insurmountable and would rule Kenya forever. They cheated that it was futile to struggle for national independence. The collaborators were used like colonial dogs to hunt and capture freedom fighters. They tortured and murdered their fellow Africans for the colonialists. Yet, when British colonialism was inevitably defeated and Kenya became an independent country, it was not only the patriots that won freedom but all Kenyans including the traitors and collaborators. For history has shown that the liberation struggle liberates both the patriots and the traitors, the oppressed and the oppressors! However, today we are proud of the freedom fighters while we despise those who collaborated with colonialism.

British colonialism was replaced by neocolonialism. This meant that after 1963 Kenya was opened for exploitation by world imperialism spearheaded by Western imperialism of the United States of America, Europe, Canada, and Japan. The Kenyatta - KANU regime that took over the leadership of the country from the British perpetuated the status quo of colonialism. They inherited and maintained the colonial state intact. They used the same constitution, laws, government, policies, army, police, prisons, democracy, culture, and education system almost intact to impose the capitalist system that was brought into the country by colonialism. The Kenyatta - KANU regime joined colonialism and imperialism to exploit and oppress the Kenyan masses and by so doing to also perpetuate the capitalist culture of land grabbing, tribalism, greed, dictatorship, and all forms of exploitation and oppression of person by person. They not only ignored or suppressed the patriotic and liberation spirit of the freedom fighters and crushed the Mau Mau movement and ideology, but they also used the state to violate the democratic and human rights of the Kenyan patriots and masses.

Fortunately, Kenyan patriots and masses did not stop resisting and struggling for their freedom and liberation just because Black Kenyans led by Kenyatta - KANU had taken over power from the White oppressors. On the contrary, throughout the time of the Kenyatta regime, there were protests, resistances, struggles, and oppositions by patriots that demanded democracy, human rights, and the end of tribalism, nepotism, dictatorship, land grabbing, corruption, capitalism, and imperialism. The Kenyatta and successive KANU regimes maintained themselves in power

through practicing tribalism, arresting, detaining, imprisoning, and assassinating patriots and all forms of opposition. Still, this did not kill the opposition. Neither did it succeed in making the patriots and masses of Kenyans surrender to the neocolonial capitalist regimes.

The Kenyatta - KANU and the successive regimes were supported not only by the former colonialists but also by the same people who had served British colonialism in various ways and capacities and the newly recruited collaborators who formed the few capitalist elites, tribal bigots, and opportunists who were motivated by personal aggrandisements, narrow and parochial interests. Those people had lost their humanity to become slaves of the reactionary government and state motivated by the desire to accumulate wealth from bureaucratic capitalism and other forms of primitive accumulation.

The Moi - KANU regime that succeeded that of Kenyatta - KANU continued with the exploitation, oppression, repression, and betrayal of the majority of Kenyans. Only that it became even worse than its predecessor. At the same time, the resistance of the patriots and masses grew with time. The one-party dictatorship that was implemented through the amendment of the colonialist inherited constitution had become akin to fascism. All opposition was banned and detentions without trial, imprisonment through kangaroo courts, torture, and political assassinations were the order of the day.

However, even the Moi - KANU regime with all its fascism against the Kenyan people failed to silence the voice of Kenyan patriots that fought for democratic and progressive reforms both overtly and covertly. The patriots and revolutionaries made great sacrifices in the process of the struggle which included being denied the right of citizenship, employment, torture, exile, and all manner of persecutions including political assassinations.

Some patriots of those days are still in the struggle while others have either joined the exploiters and oppressors of today or retired and are observing the continuing struggle from afar. Still, others have joined the political parties of the reactionary ruling class where they are lavishly paid or rewarded for defending the present status quo of capitalism. Others have been recruited by the numerous NGOs funded by imperialist governments whose motive is to either make Kenyan citizens struggle for reforms within the capitalist system and to avoid revolutionary struggle whose objective is to replace capitalism and imperialism with socialism. Others have turned into cynics who only watch, criticise and laugh at from afar those continuing with the struggle today. Some among them have written or are writing autobiographies about their contribution to the struggle yesterday while refusing to acknowledge that the struggle is far from over. But at least they made their contributions to the struggle yesterday.

History continues to reveal that not all travel the journey of the struggle for freedom and liberation until the end. Some transform from being patriots of yesterday to become traitors on the way while others become exhausted for lack of hope and simply give up. But the revolutionaries never give up. Instead, they proceed with the journey towards the freedom and liberation of humanity throughout their lives. And so the struggle for national and social liberation of Kenya, Africa, and the world ultimately culminating into socialism and communism that today is spearheaded by CPK continues and, inevitably must continue.

Many comrades were in the struggle with us. Together we struggled in student politics and also in the covert underground 'December Twelfth Movement' and 'Mwakenya' and are not alive today. Some were tortured to death. Others died in prison or exile or as a consequence of the psychological and physical injuries they suffered from the various persecutions perpetrated upon them by the Moi - KANU regime. I will always love and cherish these comrades as peoples' heroes. These include the following: Karimi Nduthu, Ngugi Gupta, Mwakudua Ringoma Mwachofi, Muhoro Githirwa, Adhu Awiti, Mzee Mbewa, Kariuki Gathitu, Mwamba Shete, Njuguna Mutahi, Kaara Macharia, Peter Young Kihara, Kariuki Gathitu, Jimmy Mturukana, David Onyango Oloo, Kahuha from Kiamba, Gerald Mghanga, Wahome Mutahi, Egadwa Maragoli, Jazrae Ndawiro, Mwanjama Shadrack, Odindo Opiata, Oyangi Mbajis, Simon Gicheha, Kinywa wa Nyeri, Gibson Maina Karanja, Gitau wa Muimoto, Ojijo of Gem, to mention but a few.

Our struggle was not in vain. Our heroes did not suffer arrest, torture, detention, imprisonment, all manner of persecution, and death for nothing. Through their contributions, we achieved democratic and progressive reforms, including multi-partyism, enhanced human rights, and the 2010 constitution.

When we organised and struggled underground and distributed the then proscribed 'Pambana' and 'Mwakenya' leaflets we were mocked, cursed, and hunted like wild animals. Then it was seen as a crime to fight dictatorship in the form of KANU and a one-party system. What is important to remember is that the leaders of the political parties of the ruling class popularized by the national intelligence services, the press, and the state, Kalozi Musyoka, Musalia Mudavadi, Gideon Moi, Moses Wetangula, Uhuru Kenyatta, and many around Raila Odinga, and also third President of Kenya Mwai Kibaki, all considered us as dangerous criminals who deserved to be arrested, tortured and imprisoned. They were cowards, opportunists, and sycophants of the Moi KANU dictatorship who condemned us for demanding democratic reforms, including multi-partyism and human rights. But we were not discouraged. Instead, we struggled despite the persecutions we underwent while believing that we were engaged in the just struggle that as patriots and revolutionaries could not afford to abscond. The revolutionary struggle that was hard, long, and protracted was just and historically inevitable and worth the sacrifice we made. We were struggling not only to liberate the exploited and oppressed but also the whole Kenyan society that includes the exploiters and oppressors themselves.

We were proved right. Towards the end of the 1980s, the Moi-KANU dictatorship was engulfing the whole society including his friends, tribesmen, religious leaders, business partners, and members of his class and politics party of KANU. Those who had been condemning and persecuting us came to agree that we were right in opposing the dictatorship and demanding democratic reforms. They agreed with us that there was the need to have multiparty democracy, human rights, and constitutional reforms. Today none of the leaders of the political parties of the press and the ruling class would wish or accept the return of one political party system or the era of blatant dictatorship.

Yet, while we celebrate the political reforms we have achieved hitherto and are committed to consolidating them, still we continue with the struggle. For, unlike other political parties, coalitions, and formations, we the Communist Party of Kenya (CPK) are communist revolutionaries. And although as communist revolutionaries we have fought for the reforms and still support the struggle for more progressive reforms that will better the welfare of the masses of Kenyans even within the present neocolonial capitalist system, we at the same time do not believe or accept that the reforms are an end in themselves. Neither do we believe or agree that the struggle is over.

CPK's vision and mission are to remove the capitalist system and replace it with a higher and inevitable socio-political-economic system - socialism. So we continue with the struggle against corruption, inequality, poverty, backwardness, primitive accumulation, tribalism, gender inequality, all forms of discrimination and marginalisation of communities and individuals, and the system of exploitation and oppression of person by person. We demand land reforms that will provide land to all Kenyans who need it based on the principle of land to the tillers. We fight for wealth sharing and distributive justice that will ensure that all citizens and all who live in the country participate in creating the wealth from the natural, human, and other resources of the country and accruing direct and indirect benefits thereof equitably. In summary, CPK is engaged in the struggle for socialism.

Looking back in history and the achievements we have made hitherto, we are sure that however hard and protracted the struggle for socialism appears, it will inevitably and of necessity come to be. This is because we do not and must not sleep. Rather we continue to organize and mobilize for socialism every day. And the objective conditions in Kenya and the world point to the truth that capitalism has failed to resolve the numerous problems and contradictions facing humanity today. It will inevitably be replaced by socialism.

"However, even the Moi - KANU regime with all its fascism against the Kenyan people failed to silence the voice of Kenyan patriots that fought for democratic and progressive reforms both overtly and covertly. The patriots and revolutionaries made great sacrifices in the process of the struggle which included being denied the right of citizenship, employment, torture, exile, and all manner of persecutions including political assassinations"



The late Karimi Nduthu

ASSESSING THE MANIFESTATION AND IMPACT OF NEO-COLONIALISM IN KENYA TODAY

By Benedict Wachira

'The UK is the largest European foreign investor in Kenya. Currently, there are about 100 British investment companies based in Kenya, valued at more than STG £2.0 billion.'

~Website of the British High Commission in Kenya

Title: Neo-colonialism - The last stage of imperialism

Author: Kwame Nkrumah

1 Introduction

There is no doubt that Kwame Nkrumah's Neo-colonialism - The last stage of imperialism is extremely relevant in the Africa of today. Written in 1965, the analysis in the book can still be seen to different degrees in all African countries. The book extends Vladimir Lenin's fundamental contributions to Marxism as found in his book 'Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism' by correctly analysing imperialism in the African context (even though Nkrumah was at the time still on his journey towards Marxism. [1])

The analysis in this article is limited to the introduction section in Nkrumah's book, and it will focus on the relevance of the book's analysis on Kenya.

Kenya's economy is essentially neo-colonial. As Nkrumah explains, independence from colonialism paved way for indirect control by the former colonial master, Britain, and also by the rising imperialist power, the United States of America (USA) among other European imperialist powers. The article will highlight the neo-colonial stranglehold in Kenya by briefly focusing on agriculture, banking, trade, and the security sectors.

Before I proceed to contextualise neo-colonialism in Kenya today, I have to point out one issue in Nkrumah's analysis that was not relevant in the Africa of 1965 and is still not relevant today. Nkrumah contradicts himself by seeing the policy of non-alignment as an antithesis and cure to neo-colonialism. He posits that:

The struggle against neo-colonialism is not aimed at excluding the capital of the developed world from operating in less developed countries. It is aimed at preventing the financial power of the developed countries from being used in such a way as to impoverish the less developed...He [the capitalist country] may do better for himself if he invests in a non-aligned country than if he invests in a neo-colonial one.



British soldiers resting at the British Army Training Unit in Kenya (BATUK) in Nanyuki



He proceeds to argue that the ideological orientation of the financial power doesn't matter, as long as the non-aligned country pursues an independent national plan. What he later mentions but fails to apply in his analysis is that imperialism is a logical and historical result of capitalism, and as he correctly puts it, neo-colonialism is an expression of imperialism. It is therefore illogical (or perhaps opportunist) for him to claim that the so-called non-aligned countries can accept finance capital from capitalist/imperialist countries, but still somehow escape the manacles of neo-colonialism. Such an argument defeats the whole essence of his book.

2 Agriculture

Tea farming was introduced in Kenya in the colonial era and has since independence continued to be Kenya's leading export crop and one of the highest contributors to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).[2] Kenya is Africa's largest exporter of tea.[3] In 1982, almost 20 years after independence, Willy Mutunga noted that the British multinational, Brooke Bond,[4] which had monopolised both worldwide tea production and the world tea market controlled a significant portion of Kenya's tea sector, to the detriment of the Kenyan nationals.[5] Today, Unilever (Brooke Bond's mother company) owns 16,223-acre tea farms and produces over 32 million kilogrammes of tea annually.[6] Finlays, founded over 200 years ago by Scotland's leading capitalist James Finlay and now owned by Britain's multinational John Swire & Sons Limited, is an affiliate of the Sun Capital Partners Company, an American multinational private equity firm[7] that owns 10,300 acres of tea farms in Kenya. It produces over 28 million kilogrammes of tea per year.[8] Another British multinational company, Williamson Tea Company[9] farms tea on its 5,255-acre land in Kenya. In its financial year ending 2020, it sold over 15 million kilogrammes of tea and made a profit of over 4.8 million dollars.[10]

These three multinational entities, which control close to 20% of Kenya's 450 000 tonnes annual tea production (without including their effective control of the sector) were established in Kenya during the colonial era (Unilever Tea Kenya Limited was established in 1922,[11] Williamson Tea in 1952[12] and Finlays close to 100 years ago[13]) and their structure of business continued uninterrupted even after independence. Kenyans who live close to the farms of the three multinational companies have historically accused the

multinationals of having stolen their ancestral land, and currently, there is ongoing action in the National Land Commission where the locals are pushing for the non-extension of the hundred-year leases which are now in the final period towards expiry.[14] These three multinationals are a small representation of many other multinational companies that control the Kenyan agricultural sector, including coffee farming, horticulture, and fruit farming. Most of the profits are repatriated back to the mother countries to the detriment of neo-colonial Kenya.

3 Banking and Finance

According to the British High Commission in Kenya, 'there are about 100 British investment companies based in Kenya, valued at more than STG £2.0 billion... Significant British investors include Barclays Bank, Standard Chartered Bank, GlaxoSmithKline, ACTIS (formerly CDC Capital Partners), De La Rue and Unilever.'[15]

De La Rue has been printing currency in Kenya since independence save for the period between 1966 and 1985 when another UK firm, Bradbury Wilkinson, did the job.[16] It currently has an annual money printing tender of 100 million dollars.[17]

In Kenya, the biggest banks owned by western interests are ABSA Bank, Standard Chartered, and Diamond Trust Bank. London-based Standard Chartered Bank PLC owns 73.89% of Kenya's Standard Bank Limited through its subsidiary, Standard Chartered Holdings (International) BV.[18] ABSA Bank Kenya PLC is owned by foreign shareholders who include Barclays Bank PLC (British owned), through their subsidiary ABSA group Limited which owns 68.5% of the Bank. [19] Diamond Trust Bank is controlled by the Aga Khan, who is a British citizen with vast international finance capital interests.[20] The three British-owned banks are part of the ten most profitable banks in Kenya, and they exert significant influence in the Kenyan financial scene, just as is expected of institutions of promotion of international finance capital. All three banks were established in Kenya during the colonial period.

4 Trade

Lenin argues that the rise of capitalist monopolies and combinations in the capitalist countries led to the scramble for raw materials in the underdeveloped territories, and also led to the search for new markets in those new territories.[21] This 'search' led to colonisation of Africa, which was seen as a source of cheap raw material, and as a place where international finance capital could be invested in return for more profits. This relationship continues today under neo-colonialism. Kenya continues to export unprocessed agricultural goods, and in return imports finished industrial goods. In 2019, Kenya had a trade deficit of over 11 billion dollars.[22] In that year, raw exports, including horticulture, tea, coffee, and iron and steel accounted for 59% of the total export bills.[23] On the other hand, major imports including 'petroleum products, industrial machinery, iron and steel, motor vehicles, plastics in primary and non-primary form, and pharmaceutical products accounted for 49.5% of all import bills.[24] The neo-colonial nature of this form of trade is underlined by what is published in the United Kingdom High Commission in Kenya website[25] which states that:

The UK is Kenya's second most important export destination. Kenya mainly exports tea, coffee, and horticultural products, with the country accounting for 27% of the fresh produce and 56% of the black tea market in the UK. On the other hand, motor vehicles, printed materials, machinery, and chemicals form the bulk of imports from the United Kingdom.

The prices of the export goods are determined by the world markets, which is a euphemism for traders from the industrialised world, while Kenya and indeed Africa has no say on the price of the finished goods that it imports. Nkrumah noted this aspect of imperialism over 50 years ago and it continues to date.

5 Neo-colonial military presence in Kenya

In addition to the indirect economic and financial control of a neo-colonial state by external powers, Nkrumah states that 'in an extreme case the troops of the imperial power may garrison the territory of the neo-colonial State and control the government of it.' Even though Kenya does not currently fall within this extreme case, it is important to note that every year, over 10,000 British army troops perform their military training right in the middle of Kenya (Nanyuki).[26] This huge number of imperialist forces is extremely dangerous especially when it is compared to Kenya's military personnel which stands at about 25,000 in number.[27] Given that the British troops have better equipment, long fighting history, probably better training, and a good knowledge of the Kenyan terrain, it is not far-fetched to imagine that the former colonial master may in an 'extreme case' use those troops to control the political and economic processes in Kenya. Indeed, in March this year, the British troops burnt over 10,000 acres of wildlife land during their training sessions, and not a single senior Kenyan government official publicly condemned the act.[28] This is in spite of the fact that Kenya depends heavily on wildlife tourism for her foreign exchange. The silence is an indication of the neo-colonial influence of the British in Kenya.

6 Conclusion

This article has shown, by use of Kenya as an example, that the analysis in Kwame Nkrumah's Neo-colonialism - The last stage of imperialism is as relevant today as ever before. Beyond the weakness that this article pointed out at the beginning, it will be critical that Africa's present generations consult Nkrumah's wisdom, and chart a future for a Continent that is united, truly independent, anti-imperialist, and as Nkrumah later learned, socialist.



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LITERARY STYLE OF EXPOSING THE ROOT CAUSE OF CORRUPTION THROUGH THE NOVEL



Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe

By Mwandawiro Mghanga

Title: No Longer at Ease
Author: Chinua Achebe

The novel, *No Longer at Ease*, starts at the end and ends at the end. We briefly encounter the main protagonist, Obi, in court awaiting judgment for a case of corruption against him. Other important protagonists, Mr. Green, Clara, and Obi's mother are also mentioned in the first two pages. At the same time, the main theme of the story, corruption, which has become part and parcel of Nigerian life - and of course that of African countries - is introduced with the sarcastic humour which is present throughout the story,

.....Some Civil Servants paid as much as sixpence to obtain a doctor's certificate of illness for the day. (pg. 1)

The theme involving the hypocrisy of the whole corrupt society which drives honest individuals towards corruption and then pretends to be surprised and unaware of the circumstances that breed corruption is also adroitly introduced at the beginning by use of sarcasm that will be clear as one reads the story,

I cannot understand why he did it, said the British Council man thoughtfully. (pg. 2)

The story then unfolds through a series of flashbacks revolving around the life and

experiences of Obi Okonkwo. The whole story is told through the literary technique of 'flashback'. Through 'flashbacks', we are told about the life of Obi in London and the start of his love affair with Clara, and later the tragic end of their love. Through 'flashback', we also learn about Obi's childhood in the countryside in Umuofia. We also meet his parents and family, his relationship with them, and the role they play in influencing the tragic circumstances of the story. Through 'flashbacks' we also encounter the Umuofia Progressive Union and several characters, including his friend Joseph, who relates to Obi and who plays a great role in the story. Obi's experiences in Lagos and working life under and alongside hypocritical and malicious European civil servants are also

told through 'flashbacks'.

Achebe combines the use of 'flashbacks', oral literature techniques such as Igbo proverbs, narrative allusions, extremely humorous dialogues, and other cases of language use based on the rich Igbo language and culture, to produce a unique and very interesting work of literary art.

The author uses 'flashbacks' to create suspense which ensures that once we start reading *No Longer at Ease* we read until the end of the story without putting the book down. For example, immediately at the beginning of the story, we encounter Obi in court awaiting judgment on a case of corruption against him. But the author deliberately avoids telling us about the judgment but instead puts us in a series of 'flashbacks' which gradually and skillfully unfold the theme of the story. We are, therefore, immediately put into suspense. We are glued to read on to find more about this Obi and why he came to begin accepting bribes.

Again, at the beginning of the story, the author deliberately tells us of Obi,

Mercifully, he had recently lost his mother and Clara had gone out of his life. (pg. 2)

We are not told more than this about Obi's mother and Clara, to begin with. So we are interested to go on reading to find out about Obi's mother and why the author finds it important to mention her at the beginning. In the process, we are also captured by the wish to find more about Clara and the circumstances that lead to Obi losing her. At the same time, by mentioning the fact that Obi lost his mother and Clara only recently, the author seems to suggest right from the very beginning that Obi deserves the reader's sympathy. It is also insinuated that we should be ready to read about the circumstances that brought Obi to court before we pronounced judgment upon him. Furthermore, the significance of mentioning Obi's loss of both his mother and Clara is that one of the central themes of the story is the tragedy of the love affair between Obi and Clara. Igbo cultural beliefs dictate that Obi must not marry his fiancée Clara who happens to be from a family of an Osu or outcast. His family and Umuofia society use all means possible to pressurise him to leave a woman he sincerely loves. Thus the tragedy of Obi's love affair with Clara is built around having to choose either

his parents or clansmen on the one hand or Clara on the other. It is left to the readers to judge whether the tragedy would have been less if Obi had chosen Clara. In any case, in the end, Obi loses everything and we cannot help sympathising with him.

The story ends with,

Everybody wondered why. The learned judge, as we have seen, could not comprehend how an educated young man and so forth. The British Councilman, even the men of Umuofia, did not know. And we must presume, despite his certitude, Mr. Green did not know either. (pg. 154)

So, as soon as we reach the end of the story we immediately remember that the author had started the story with similar words,

I cannot understand why he did it, said the British Council man thoughtfully. (pg. 2)

Thus the author succeeds to make the readers reflect on the circumstances that drove Obi to gradually enter corruption. And when we do, we comprehend the sarcasm conveyed through, "Everybody wondered why?" The point is that everybody knows why, since corruption has become a culture in society everybody is guilty of corruption in one way or the other, directly or indirectly. Like what Jesus said about the prostitute in the Bible, nobody can cast a stone against Obi for accepting a bribe.

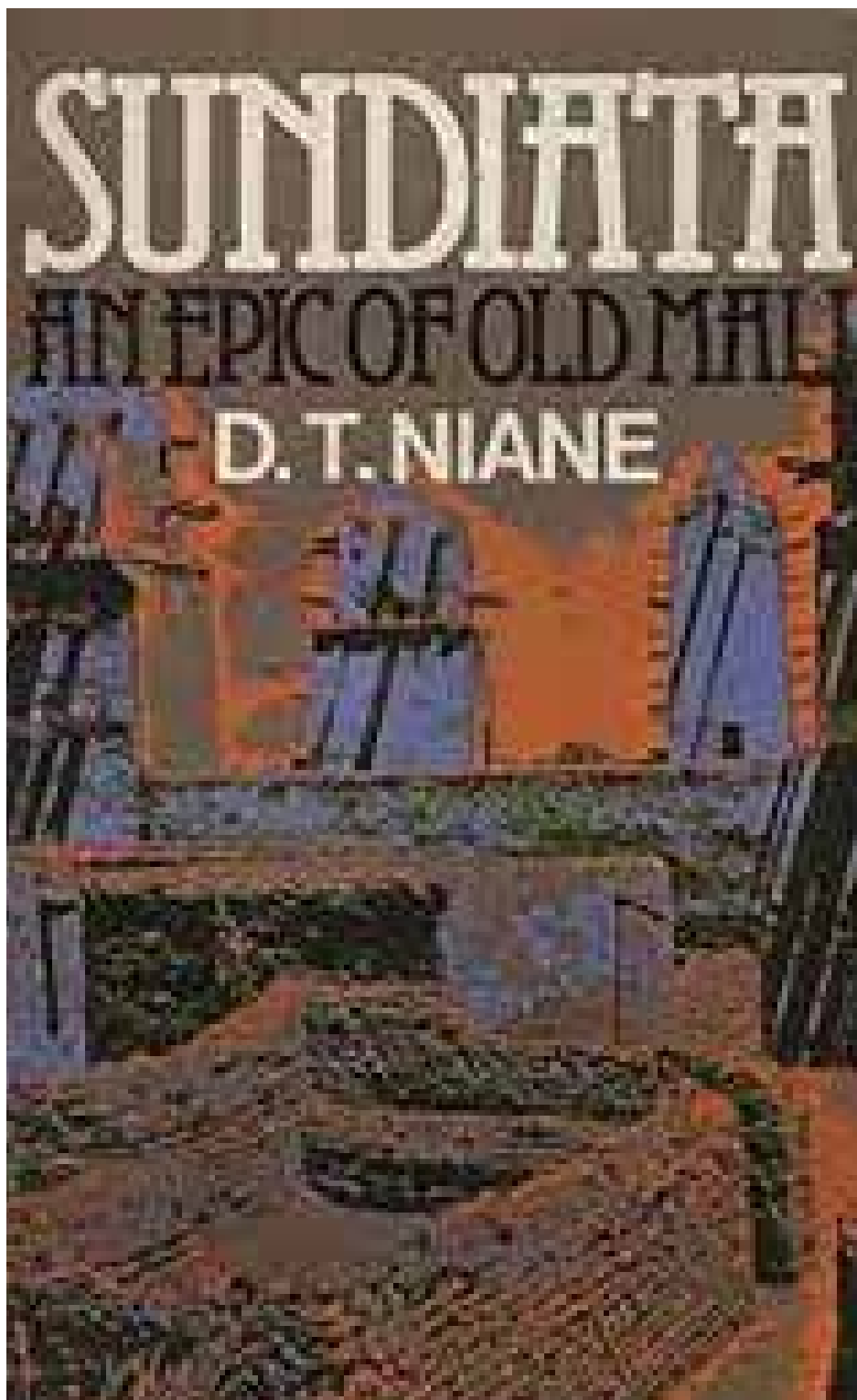
As the flashbacks reveal, the story of *No Longer at Ease* is a tragedy of a young man committed to honesty and the good of his society but who is coerced by the circumstances and material conditions of his country and society to degenerate into immoralities and corruption inherent in the society he wants to correct. Obi returns to Nigeria from England committed to being an example of virtue. While working in the office in charge of overseas scholarships, Obi refuses to take advantage of his position to acquire wealth as other people were doing through soliciting bribes or sexually exploiting young women desperate for overseas scholarships. He remains loyal to his fiancée Clara and the moral behaviour he acquired from his Christian upbringing.

But gradually, circumstances and the society which has accepted corruption as part of the culture drives Obi to corruption. As a person with a university education from abroad and one employed in European jobs, Obi is forced to live an expensive and conspicuous high life which his salary cannot afford. He lives in European quarters of the city away from the slums where the majority live, he employs a house boy and engages in consumerism and urban leisure and pleasures. His European boss, Mr. Green, deliberately entices him to enter into the trap of taking loans which he can hardly afford to pay. Mr. Green and his fellow European civil servants consciously create conditions for destroying honest African civil servants to prove that Africans are incompetent and inherently corrupt.

But, again, the whole of African society, including the likes of Joseph and Umuofia Progressive Society, expects that educated people like Obi should live a flamboyant and lavish life conducive to the status of Africans with European jobs! If they live a humble life, then they are not respected. They are encouraged to practice nepotism and tribalism and even to accept bribes to advance themselves, their families, clans, and tribes. Again, besides having to pay loans and to pay for an expensive lifestyle he cannot afford, Obi has to support his family at the village in Umuofia. He has to pay medical fees for his mother and school fees for his brothers. All these pressures combine to drive Obi to take a bribe.

Thus Achebe, in *No Longer at Ease*, uses the style of beginning the story at the end and ending it at the same place where it began, i.e., in court. The background of the circumstances of the case of corruption involving Obi Okonkwo is skillfully narrated through a series of 'flashbacks'. At the end of the story, therefore, Achebe succeeds to convey his message: it is not Obi Okonkwo alone who is facing charges of corruption but the entire Nigerian society that has embraced corruption as a culture. Obi Okonkwo is only a symbol. Furthermore, Achebe contends that the root causes of corruption as narrated in the story must be addressed to liberate the society from corruption.

LITERARY APPRECIATION: THE PURPOSE OF THE EPIC AS A LITERARY FORM



By Mwandawiro Mghanga

Title: Sundiata - Epic of Old Mali
Author: Mamadou Kouyate (Recorder)

1. Introduction

I wrote this literary appreciation in the 1980s when I was a student at the University of Nairobi. Since Itikadi is a publication about socialism theory and practice, I have decided to submit it for publishing in the current issue of Itikadi not only to show the importance of using the method of historical materialism in literary appreciation but also the role of literature in the struggles for change. For literature is a weapon. In a class society, literature reflects class contradictions and struggles thereof. It can be a weapon of seeking to perpetuate the status quo or a revolutionary weapon for fighting for progressive change. The founders of scientific socialism, Marx, Engels and Lenin and other Marxists including Mao, Kim III Sung, Fidel Castro, Agostino Neto, Marcelino Santos, and even Mau Mau national freedom fighters, appreciated the role of literature as an art and a weapon of the struggle for the freedom and progress of society and human being. They emphasized the dialectical relationship between form and content which makes literature art that should be appreciated as such.

The authors and books mentioned in the essay can be referred to through Google search.

The essay aims to depict the purpose of the epic as a form of literature and the work of griots in specific historical and material conditions, that of feudalism, as shown in Sundiata - The Epic of Old Mali. At the same time, I argue that the epics of Africa could be useful at the present historical period not only as a form of entertainment and reminder of the historical achievements made by African people but also of conserving the status quo or fighting against reaction.

2. The epic and the epic-artist (griot):

The epic is a literary art that uses historical material to create, recreate and even romanticize certain chosen historical facts and truths (usually of heroic nature) for clear deliberate ends. Usually, the epic takes the form of a story or long narrative poem. In this case, it is in a story form. What historical events are chosen and performed or presented as the epic

are subject to the orator or creator of the epic, his or her purpose, and the objective material and historical conditions which, incidentally, give birth to the epic as a literary form?

Of course, it is not the intention or duty of the griot or creator of the epic to record and narrate historical facts truthfully and objectively, exactly as they are (or were) as he or she is not a historian but an artist. The epic performer (or griot in this context) as depicted in *Sundiata-The Epic of Old Mali*, does not claim or pretend to be objective. The griot is a propagandist who has taken sides in the narration of historical events in Old Mali, he uses his artistic skills of narrating historical events so successfully that the audience is convinced of the greatness of Sundiata. Like all griots anywhere in the world, he does this by 'adding salt and a lot of spices' to the tale based on the great history of West Africa. And this is precisely the objective of Djeli Mamoudou Kouyate, a 'master in the art of eloquence', to convince Niane and any other audience that, "Sundiata was the father of Mali and gave the world peace. After him, the world has seen not a greater conqueror...."

The purpose of the epic is not the same as that of history which is more confined to being objective than subjective. So, to say that the epic is a purposeless distortion of history is to deny the very existence of the epic as a unique literary art form. For, although the epic can be a source of historical material, as epics are based on actual historical events, nevertheless it must not be forgotten that the epic is a literary art that is very much subjective to the creator or performer. As a creative artist, the epic performer or writer has the privilege of 'adding salt and spices' to his or her narrations of actual historical happenings. Only a bad historian is expected to do this.

3. The epic of Sundiata-a product of feudalism

The epic of Sundiata is a product of a feudal mode of production. Feudalism is seen as characterised by a highly centralised nobility and the king raised above the people. The economy is agricultural, mainly producing rice. They also hunt and give part of their produce to the nobility as a form of tax. Religion plays a very important part in Mali in preserving the status quo and justifying the existence of the privileged class and king. It is at the privileged class where we find Kouyates, the griots, playing a very important role as people attached to the kings of Mali with specific tasks of celebrating their military exploits, praising and romanticising their heroic and individualistic achievements, and in this way ensuring that their prestige among the ruled is always enhanced.

4. Griots

Thus the griots too were the product of the feudalistic mode of production. They (the griots) were literary artists who used their high gift and power of language- literary skills- to perpetuate feudalism by working hard towards convincing the audience to accept the 'inevitable', 'invaluable' and 'invincible' role of the nobility and feudal ruling class without question.

It is important to remember that M. Kouyate is not the first griot to narrate the story of Sundiata. He himself says, "My word is pure and free of untruth, it is the word of my father's father. I will give you my father's words as I received them, royal griots do not know what lying is. (pg. 1)"

Thus Mamadou Kouyate claims that whatever he is going to narrate has already been narrated for generations to the children of Mali. Furthermore, every word of the epic should be accepted as truth, the griot insists. Hence, since this particular epic has been narrated many times, it also means that it has been used many times to support the status quo by the deliberate romanticisation of Sundiata and the nobility. Mamadou Kouyate continues to brag,

"The art of eloquence has no secret for us; without us, the names of kings would vanish into oblivion, we are the memory of mankind; by the spoken word we bring to life the deeds and exploits of kings for younger generations....history holds no misery for us; we teach the vulgar as much as we want to teach them, for it is we who keep the keys to the old doors of Mali". (pg. 1)

So the role of griots is to preserve the knowledge and history of Mali. They use their literary talents and abilities to mystify history to the ordinary people so that it can suit the purpose of serving the king and helping him rule in peace and stability. While doing this, the griots also get themselves favours from the ruling class. In this regard, they are like the modern sycophants throughout Africa who earn power and wealth by singing the praises of the 'modern kings' called presidents. For example, we are told that Lalla Fasseke was able to win the heart of the cruel king Soumaoro Kante Soso by praising him to his delight and happiness.

While praising the kings (also like modern sycophants in Africa) the griots do not fail to praise themselves for self-aggrandizement,

"Kings have prescribed destinies just like men and sees who probe the future know it. They have knowledge of the future, where we griots are depositories of the knowledge of the past. But whoever knows the history of a country can read its future." (pg. 41)

5. How history is shaped in Sundiata: The Epic of Old Mali

We see, therefore, according to Mamadou Kouyate, history is shaped and moved by individuals called kings. It is the intrigues, plots, and counter-plots of the nobility that shape the history of a people. The whole story and all the events in the epic revolve around the supernatural character of Sundiata and his struggle to regain his kingdom from the treachery of Sassouma Berete and Mai Djata and other kings and kinglets. All events in the story of the epic are directed towards the future greatness of Sundiata. The very birth of Sundiata is mystical and predetermined. The son of Sogolon, the strange buffalo woman, Sundiata has a very extraordinary childhood. His expulsion from Miana and his experiences in exile are all deliberately created by his destiny for his great future. Nothing can destroy the destiny of Sundiata of becoming a king. Even evil is directed towards his future success and prosperity. Sundiata is like Moses or Jesus Christ in that he was created by God to play a definite historical role destined for him, to create an empire, unite all small kingdoms under Mali, and establish law and order among the fighting people. He is also like Shaka and Fumo Liyongo.

6. The reactionary role of the epic

In short, the epic played a big role in defending and perpetuating the feudal system of Old Mali. It was used as a weapon of the ruling class against the oppressed masses.

When analysed from this point of view, *Sundiata: The Epic of Old Mali*, is reactionary as it teaches the oppressed to accept oppression. For if handled by critics who support the status quo of Mali or Kenya (or of any other class society) today just like in the history of Old Mali, the epic can be used to preach the falsehood that classes are inevitable and that every person's condition in life is predetermined by God above and that the struggle for freedom and of liberation from exploitation and oppression is futile.

This reactionary role of the epic is especially effective considering that, hitherto, the concept of the state is still mystical to the masses who have been made to attribute a religious meaning and attitude to it. In Kenya, for example, just as it was in Old Mali as narrated in the epic, religion has been and is still used to achieve and retain political and economic power. The sycophantic praises by Galla Fasseke of emperor *Sundiata* are part and parcel of the culture of Kenyan politics.

7. Charity, an embodiment of the morality of a class society

Just as *Sundiata* used to distribute rice and meat to the same people who had produced it for him, and just as he used charity and sympathy to the poor to win their love, confidence, and trust and to ensure the stability of his oppressive system, in the same way, the ruling classes everywhere amass their wealth by exploiting the poor and then bribe them (their victims) with a few crumbs of the wealth taken from them.

Charity, generosity, justice, and mercy to the poor and the weak provide the moral message of the epic. We are told that generosity and care for the poor had contributed very much to the success of *Sundiata*,

"Djata's justice spared nobody. He followed the very word of God. He protected the weak against the strong and people would make journeys lasting several days to come and demand justice of him. Under his sun the upright man was rewarded and the wicked punished". (pg. 81)

We are also taught that good deeds always breed good deeds and bad deeds, in the end, destroy whoever does them. *Sundiata* escapes death by being kind to the witches set against him by his malicious stepmother Sassouma. Soumasso Konkomba, the leader of the witches provides the voice for giving the narrator's moral comment, "Nothing can be done against a heart full of kindness, (pg. 26)".

On the other hand, Sassouma is destroyed by her selfishness, pride, and jealousy. Soumaro Kante, the sorcerer-king, the cruelest and oppressive person mentioned in the epic, is destroyed by his evil acts despite his great magic. Perhaps this is a lesson that history is against all oppressors and that the victory of all oppressed people is inevitable.

Of course, justice, generosity, mercy, kindness, and charity are all humane attributes that all persons should embrace. But there

cannot be true justice under an unjust system as that of feudalist Old Mali. It is not justice that some people should have more than they need while others are in perpetual need. After all, a person in need is a slave indeed. There is certainly something wrong with a society in which normal people have to depend on charity to live.

What *Sundiata* and the rich in the epic donated to help the poor was itself part of what had been exploited from them (the poor). The feudal class that controlled the basic means of production, land, amassed wealth from appropriating the product of the labour of the peasants. Their charity to the poor was, therefore, as in all class societies, a means of appeasing and enslaving their victims while cheating their consciences at the same time. For it is not charity when one gives you part of what he or she has stolen from you. The griot, quite naturally, praises this morality as he was a beneficiary of the parasite class.

8. The progressive role of the epic:

Yet, the epic can still be used to play a progressive role in contemporary Africa. There is the need to decolonise the minds of Africans from centuries of slavery, domination, and colonialism. In this regard, *Sundiata-The Epic of Old Mali* is certainly a rebuff to the racist claim that Africans were incapable of creating literature before the coming of white people. In this book, Niane has proved beyond any shadow of a doubt that African people had not only a dynamic history but also literary artists and beautiful oratures many centuries before they were invaded by colonialism.

He has done this by going to his roots and listening to and recording the epic from his people's artist, Mamadou Kouyate. When one reads the epic he or she admires the adroit use of language, choice of words, the use of repetition, ideophones, symbolism, imagery, and all the literary styles employed by the griot. The narrator, Mamadou Kouyate, succeeds to create a wonderful piece of art that captures the interest of the reader or listener to the end.

Niane summarises the purpose of his work thus:

"May this book open the eyes of more than one African and induce him to come and sit humbly beside the ancients and hear the words of the griots who teach wisdom and history".

In East Africa, pre-Twentieth Swahili literature and orature are full of wonderful pieces of literary art in the form of epics.

There is certainly a need to take pride in our past as Mamadou Kouyate says, ".....whoever knows the history of a country can read its future (pg. 41)".

After all, if it were not useful to be proud of our past, our enemies, imperialists, would not have found it necessary to try to annihilate our cultures, deny our histories, and generally distort or pollute our past before dominating us politically and economically.

Sundiata: The Epic of Old Mali, plays the role of the struggle to liberate African history and culture from imperialist distortion. This is the role played by Kunene's (1979 & 1981) epic poems based on the dynamic history of the Zulu people of South Africa. Mulokozi's Research of the Nanga epics of the Bahaya (1980) is relevant today for the same reason. The epic plays of Hussein (1980), wa Thiong'o & Mugo (1976), and Mulokozi remind us that we (Africans) had great heroes and heroines who led our people to struggle against colonialism. Such heroes will always inspire us to fight for total liberation. For haven't we been taught by colonial education to admire European heroes, Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Napoleon, Horatius, etc. while we have been driven by the same colonial education to despise our heroes? Isn't the Old Testament of the Bible, written several thousands of years ago, about Jewish epic history which continues to unite their nation to this day?

Now, Amilcar Cabral (1980:138-154) says that to dominate and colonise Africa, imperialism had to fight to destroy and distort the history and cultural heritage of the African people. He Cabral (ibid.) writes, ".....For as long as part of that people can have a cultural life, foreign domination cannot be sure of its perpetuation. (pg. 140)".

Cabral's views on the role of culture in the struggle for social, economic, and political liberation are echoed, elaborated, and corroborated by, among others, wa Thiong'o (1972, 1979, and 1981) whose works make a monumental contribution to the struggle for cultural, social and national liberation. He argues that the African past has been distorted immensely and that is one reason why we have been dominated economically, politically, culturally, and psychologically. The African epic can be used in the work of correcting this.

When we see *Sundiata* struggling courageously from hopelessness to hope, from a position of being despised to that of being respected and admired, we are inspired to also strive and struggle harder and with optimism. And, needless to say, the exile of *Sundiata* is very much symbolic of the exile that is being subjected to our Namibian and South Africa brothers and sisters by the racist apartheid regime in collaboration with its imperialist allies. The epic of *Sundiata* and that of Shaka will certainly provide them with motivation and hope in their struggle which will lead to inevitable victory.

By reading the epics of past African heroes, they will ask themselves, if our *Sundiata*s-our brave forefathers-were able to struggle against the tyranny of the malicious Sassouma Kante of Sosso, why can we not struggle against the racist oppressors in our country today? And if Shaka was able to unite the Zulu people in Southern Africa, if *Sundiata* was able

to do the same in West Africa, can we not also struggle to unite South Africa and Africa against apartheid and imperialism?

The tactics of war and organisation used by Sundiata and Shaka will serve as a source of inspiration, if not emulation, to SWAPO, ANC, and PNC liberation forces. The pride of blackness and that of our rich cultural heritage will help to foster the liberation of our people's minds and it will help the Black people to start asking, "Where did the rain start to beat us?" After that, the masses will start to rally together in the struggle against capitalism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, and apartheid. People who do not believe in themselves cannot be able to fight for their freedom.

Even in the struggle and battles of Sundiata, and especially the war against the ferocious Soumaraoro, Balal Fassake, Sundiata's griot plays a very important role in inspiring and provoking Sundiata and his soldiers to fight bravely and fearlessly. Balla Fasseke finds it important to recite the history of Mali to Sundiata and the soldiers before the battle. Balla Fasseke says,

"Are we, the griots of Mali, condemned to pass on to the future generations the humiliations which the king of Sosso cares to inflict on our country? No, you may be glad, children of the 'Bright Country', for the kingship of Sosso but the growth of yesterday, where that of Mali dates from that of Bilali". (pg. 62)

Here are words pregnant with nationalism and patriotism which are very important to the national liberation movements.

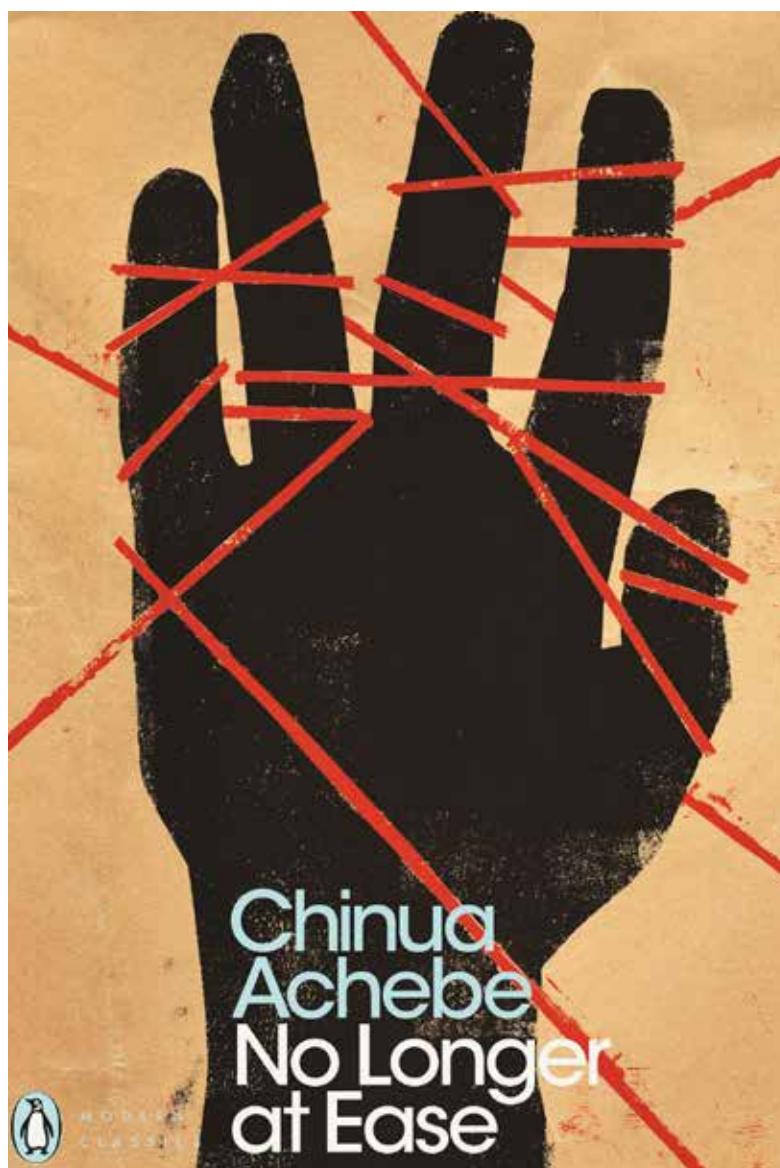
The most important message of the epic is summarised by the authoritative voice of Mamadou Kouyate,

"There would not be any heroes if deeds were condemned to man's forgetfulness, for we ply our trade to excite the admiration of the living, and to evoke those who are to come". (pg. 58)

9. Conclusion:

So, we cannot dismiss the epic as a purposeless distortion of history because, in the feudal society, it serves a definite purpose of distorting and mystifying history in the interest of the feudal ruling class. It can be and is used by the ruling classes of the World for the same purpose today. Within the nation, for example, epic histories of various ethnic groups within the same country can be used by the oppressors to divide the oppressed along ethnic lines to oppress them more thoroughly. The bourgeoisie of the world often uses nationalism (of which an epic is an effective tool) to cheat the oppressed classes that their (the bourgeoisie's) class interests are the interests of the whole country.

Yet, in countries under imperialist domination, like Kenya and Africa, which have to fight for national liberation, epics can play



the role of uniting and mobilising the people to fight for the freedom of their nation. The epic does this because it instills confidence and pride among the people of a nation by eulogizing their historical landmarks, their culture, their heroes, and most importantly- the fact that they were able to determine their destiny long before they were invaded by imperialism.

In other words, the epic, like any genre of literature or orature can be used for liberation or to fight against liberation.

SUMMARY OF THE MINIMUM PROGRAM OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF KENYA (CPK)



Members of CPK cadres at a past meeting



Introduction

The history, ideology, and profile of the Communist Party of Kenya (CPK) - which has developed progressively since 1992,- are found in the documents of the party registered with the Registrar of Political Parties of Kenya in line with the Constitution of Kenya (2010) and the laws thereof. The documents can be accessed on the party website (communistpartyofkenya.org). Hard copies can be obtained from the Party headquarters in Nairobi.

CPK participated actively in the struggle for the progressive reforms that are summarised in the national Constitution of Kenya 2010. We were involved in the debates of the Constitution making conference debates at Bomas of Kenya in Nairobi between 2003 and 2005 and fought for the inclusion of the progressive articles in the constitution that include article 10 on the national values and principles of governance that also forms the summary of the minimum program of CPK.

The national values and principles of governance include patriotism, national unity, sharing and devolution of power, the rule of law, democracy and participation of the people; human dignity, equity, social justice, inclusiveness, equality, human rights, non-discrimination, and protection of the marginalized; good governance, integrity, transparency and accountability; and sustainable development.

Despite the existence of the Constitution, the political parties and coalitions of the ruling class of Kenya today that form the Executive, are united in their selfish conspiracy to kill other political parties in Kenya so that they remain the only political parties and so that together they can dominate and manipulate the politics of the country to fit their common ideology of capitalism/neoliberalism. They grab and share only among themselves the millions of shillings of public money meant to fund political parties to nurture democracy in the country. In all this, they count on the support of imperialist governments and pro-capitalist local and foreign NGOs operating in the country, and that purport to support and teach Kenyans about democracy and human rights.

The political parties, coalitions, and organisations that dominate the country's parliament today all worship bourgeois democracy as it is practiced in the USA, United Kingdom, Western Europe, and Japan. They regard bourgeois democracy to be the Alfa and Omega of democracy. Yet in the United States that pretends to be the most democratic country in the World, left political parties are suppressed, and the citizens are forced to choose to be governed by either

the Republican or Democratic parties, both of which are capitalist and imperialist in ideology and practice. Similarly, in the UK, all political parties are suppressed, and the citizens have to choose from the Labour, Conservative or Liberal Democrats parties - all of which represent capitalism and imperialism. The aim of this is to use the political parties to conserve the democracy of the ruling capitalist classes and to use it to dilute class struggles by creating illusions of political changes through regular elections that ensure the capitalist and imperialist system remains intact. This is the democracy Kenya's ruling class and their partners are importing for Kenya and that CPK rejects and struggles against. It is not the democracy the Kenyan masses wish and aspire for as the spirit of the constitution of Kenya manifestly reveals.

The truth is that the political parties of the ruling class of Kenya and their affiliates are both committed to imposing the democracy of capitalism, neocolonialism, corruption, tribalism, cronyism, greed, primitive accumulation, dictatorship, and exploitation of person by person in the country.

CPK is sure that the democracy of the ruling capitalist class is not what the majority of Kenyans struggled for or desire for the present and future of our country. To struggle for genuine democracy - participatory democracy - social and national liberation - today also means to struggle against the status quo represented by the two political parties, their political affiliations, ideology, and what they represent.

CPK is committed to organizing and struggling for political power through participating in national elections to provide to the Kenyan people alternative social, political, and economic policies away from the present status quo and geared towards socialism.

Summary of the Minimum Program of CPK

1. Creating enabling conditions for sustainable development of providing social security for all Kenyans by first building a three-tier democratic and complementary economic system composed of the state, cooperative and private sectors.

2. Struggling to liberate the economy, politics, and international trade relations of the country from neo-colonialism and imperialism.

3. Working to defend and consolidate the progressive political reforms and democratic gains won by the struggle of the people, and that are embodied in the Constitution of Kenya. In this regard, we will collaborate with other progressive Kenyans, parties, civil society organisations, and movements to struggle for the realization of the basic tenets of the constitution on the sovereignty of the people, human rights, national values and principles of governance, separation of powers, checks and balances and devolution of governments with popular participation of the people at all levels of government.

4. Implementing development policies and strategies that aim at providing - progressively - basic needs and services for individuals and families such as security to a person, shelter, food, water, health, education, and employment and that are also entrenched in the Constitution of Kenya.

5. Reinstating the freedom and sovereignty of our country, people, and resources rather than surrendering our nation to neo-colonialism and imperialism.

6. Fostering partnership with the Kenyan people and friendly nations and people for the ownership and provision of services by the commanding heights of the economy, including money/banks/financial institutions, transport and communications and infrastructure, major natural water towers and waterworks, power generation.

7. Engaging in the most suitable technologies available in the provision of services and implementation of development and maintenance of projects. We need not invent the wheel; we need only adopt it and make it work for our purposes.

8. Mobilizing and facilitating Kenyans to conserve, protect, develop, and utilize our natural resources and environment sustainably for the present and future generations of Kenyans. We will make and implement policies that will ensure investment in natural resources brings direct and indirect benefits to the local communities as envisioned by the Constitution of Kenya.

9. Providing public-funded universal and compulsory primary and secondary education as a first stage. CPK will also provide high-quality, affordable, and subsidized college and university education, with the ultimate objective of making education free at all levels. At the same time, we will mobilize Kenyans to formulate an education and cultural policy that aims at eradicating illiteracy, poverty, and underdevelopment while producing conscious, creative, and independent social beings capable of realizing their talents, knowledge, and skills in the service of the nation, society, and humanity.

10. Implementing policies of fighting tribalism and of building national cohesion. We will mobilize Kenyans to celebrate their rich cultural and linguistic diversity in the interest of national unity and social progress. We will develop the national and official languages of Kenya as well as those of the various Kenyan nationalities.

11. Implementing, in words and deeds, policies of combatting and eradicating corruption and misuse of public resources.

12. Adopting a class and gender approach to development in all spheres of life.

13. Implementing vigorously chapter eleven of the Constitution of Kenya to reduce the gap between urban and rural areas, to lead to equality between the various regions and Counties of Kenya.

14. Carrying out progressive land and agrarian reforms based mainly on land use for sustainable land and land resources use for national development and on the principle of land to the and for the tillers.

15. Carrying out a progressive national defense policy to ensure human and national security and the elimination of terrorism and imperialist military bases in the country.

16. Implementing an independent foreign policy based on peace, solidarity, friendship, mutual respect, and reciprocity with all nations and peoples of the world while adhering to the principle of the right of all nations to self-determination and socialist internationalism. This also includes the realization of the East African Federation as fast as possible together with a progressive Pan-Africanist African Union.

MAXIMUM PROGRAM OF CPK

CPK is a Marxist/Leninist party whose ultimate program is to achieve socialism in Kenya, East Africa, Africa, and the World. The strategies and tactics of achieving this objective are based on the historical and material conditions of Kenya and the World today.

REFLECTIONS ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

By Mwandawiro Mghanga

It is now a hundred years since the October Revolution which took place in Russia in 1917 after a protracted revolutionary struggle led by the Bolsheviks among them Vladimir Lenin. The October Revolution made a significant mark in the history of the world that will never disappear despite the reactionary setbacks made by capitalism and imperialism today. The waves of the revolutionary earthquake triggered by the October Revolution reached all corners of the Earth, including African countries that include Kenya.

The struggle of the working class that was led by communist revolutionaries and a party rooted in Marxist-Leninist ideology triumphed by capturing state power from capitalists in Russia, for the first time since the short but significant history of the Paris Commune. It meant that the class of the workers and the majority poor exploited and oppressed took over state power in Russia. Thus socialism, a more superior mode and socio-political system than that of capitalism had become a reality in the World.

The October Revolution inspired the working class, the poor, and the oppressed of all countries in the World by showing that a new and better system of life than that of capitalism, colonialism, imperialism, feudalism, and slavery was possible through the united struggle of the exploited and oppressed. Yes, it was possible for the working class and the majority in society to defeat the mighty capitalist armies and capture state power and use the power to crush the capitalists, exploiters, and oppressors. The workers and the popular masses could take charge of the politics, economics, and state affairs of their country guided by the communist party, theory, and ideology. True, a new and better society called socialism was possible and had been born in Russia and the world by the October Revolution. Socialism was not a utopia but a scientific mode of production and system that could be built on Earth.

The October Revolution brought new state power not only in Russia but also in the world and it broke the unipolar rule and power of capitalism and imperialism that had hitherto ravaged the world. From then, imperialism led by the United States of America lost the monopoly of power it had used hitherto to dominate, plunder, exploit, oppress and terrorize the working class, the majority of citizens, and countries under colonialism and imperialism. Imperialism had found its match in the form of socialist soviet power of Russia given birth by the October Revolution.

After the October Revolution, the world was now divided into two blocks representing



two opposing ideological struggles. Within developed nations, it was the struggle between the reactionary capitalist class and its state and ideology versus the progressive and revolutionary classes struggling for socialism.

At the international level, it was the struggle between imperialism and socialism. Those under colonialism in Africa, Asia, and Latin America fighting for national liberation found ready moral and material support and solidarity from the Soviet Union and its socialist allies. This escalated the national struggles which brought about the independence of the countries under colonialism including those of Africa. Thus the October Revolution weakened the reactionary forces in the world while strengthening class struggles at the national and international levels.

Immediately after the October Revolution, the countries that were under Tsarist Russian colonialism found their freedom and voluntarily

joined Russia to form USSR. After the Second World War, the socialist block expanded to include the countries of Eastern Europe, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and East Germany. Korea was liberated from Japanese imperialism, socialist Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) was founded in 1948 starting the construction of socialism led by Kim III Sung amidst the intensification of the anti-imperialist struggle with the USA.

India was liberated from British colonialism in 1949 greatly weakening the British colonial empire which in turn helped to hasten the independence of other countries under British colonialism in the World.

The protracted Chinese national and socialist liberation struggle spearheaded by the Communist Party of China under

the guidance of the gallant Chairman Mao Tse Tung triumphed in 1949. Thus the anti-colonial, anti-imperialist, and socialist forces had grown into hitherto unprecedented levels also inspired by the October Revolution.

In Latin America, the Cuban revolution led by Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, and their comrades defeated the US-supported dictatorship, liberated Cuba, and started the march towards socialism in 1959. This also intensified the liberation and revolutionary struggles in South and Central America and the Caribbean nations.

In Russia, the October Revolution made rapid development progress that made the largest country in the world to be a real competing power with the US economically, scientifically, technologically, and militarily, and all this being achieved in a few decades.

When the October Revolution occurred in 1917, African countries had been under the colonialism of Western European countries. Colonialism was always rejected, resisted, and fought against in all African countries. During the era of colonialism, Africans had to endure the rule by foreigners, oppression, exploitation, plunder of their natural resources, slavery, gross violations of their human rights, lack of democracy, destruction of indigenous cultures, racism and discrimination, and all sorts of humiliation, genocides, etc. Colonialism, like slavery, was one of the darkest moments of Africa's history during which European imperialism partitioned Africa awarding each imperialist European power a portion of the continent to impose their colonialism.

The October Revolution immediately brought a big boost to the national liberation movements of the African countries who found concrete moral, diplomatic, ideological, political, military, and material support from the Soviet Union, and also, particularly after the end of the Second World War in 1945, from its socialist allies Eastern Europe, PDRK, China and Cuba. All this hastened the liberation of Africa from colonialism and apartheid.

After independence from colonialism, African countries, Kenya included, continued to receive intellectual and material support from socialist countries led by the USSR. Many economists, engineers, medical personnel, political scientist, and other professionals studied and trained in the universities and other academic and technical institutions in the USSR, Eastern Europe, PDRK, and China for free. Many large multipurpose development projects were built in African countries with the support of the USSR and socialist countries.

But it was in the field of ideology where the October Revolution played the biggest role in the World in general and Africa and Kenya in particular. Until the October Revolution, the world was dominated by

the reactionary ideology and praxis of capitalism and imperialism. The October Revolution more clearly than ever before defined the battlefield of ideas, between capitalist and imperialist ideology on one hand and socialist and communist ideology on the other hand. The philosophical myths created and maintained by capitalists and their intellectuals for centuries to hoodwink the exploited and oppressed of the world to maintain the status quo of capitalism and imperialism were demystified and exposed to more people than ever. The brutality and reactionary nature of capitalism and imperialism were exposed in theory and practice. The working class was now in charge of one of the most powerful state machinery in the world in the Soviet Union from which the working class could now launch its ideological missiles against capitalism and imperialism.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union played a big role in spreading the theory and ideology of communism in Kenya like in other countries of Africa and the world. The USSR and other socialist countries' embassies in Kenya were always open to those who desired to get hold of communist literature and education.

As a student at the University of Nairobi in the 1980s, my comrades and I used to regularly visit the friendly socialist countries' embassies to collect the literature published in Moscow and other socialist capitals. At the embassies, we received the classics of communist literature including the works of Marx, Engels, and Lenin. We had access to information and literature published by Progress Publishers and Novosti Publishers Moscow. We regularly collected literature from the embassies on socialism, theory, and practice dealing with contemporary political issues in the world from communist and liberating perspectives. There were communist popular publications in the streets of Nairobi that were accessible to the popular masses. Bookshops in Nairobi, such as Wanyie Bookshop, specialized in selling communist literature, including the works of Marx, at very affordable prices.

In this regard, the October Revolution contributed a great deal towards disseminating communist ideas in Kenya. Had it not been for this, I and many people of my generation would probably not have become communists. It is thanks to the October Revolution that we were inspired to organize communist study circles, cells and movements at the university which struggled against the dictatorial, corrupt, pro-capitalist, and pro-imperialist regime then in power in Kenya, where we demanded alternative socialist system.

No wonder the secret police discouraged citizens from visiting the embassies of communist countries in Kenya. When I was being interrogated and tortured by the police in 1985 and 1986, part of my accusation was visiting the embassies and being used as

a communist spy. Of course, I used to visit the communist embassies in Nairobi very often as I also found friends and comrades there. Yet I was never a spy but a committed communist who was engaged in the struggle for social and national liberation in Kenya that would lead to socialism.

The October Revolution not only contributed to disseminating socialist ideology in Kenya but also socialist internationalism. For example, the first-ever flight I took was in 1984 by Aeroflot, the Soviet airline that used to ferry passengers to and from most capital cities of Africa. The plane took me to Moscow where I was hosted by the friendly Russian Student Union for three days. I then travelled by Aeroflot to 17th November Street in Prague, the capital city of Czechoslovakia, which was the headquarters of the International Union of Students (IUS). Student leaders from many countries of the world that were members of the Executive Committee of IUS and I then travelled by Czechoslovakian Airlines to Sofia in Bulgaria to attend World Students and Youth Festival. It was the first time I met so many people representing so many countries, cultures, and nationalities. The experience of participating in such a large and diverse gathering of people discussing world peace, socialism, and anti-imperialist solidarity made a large contribution towards shaping my communist world view and consciousness as a human being. I returned from Moscow, Prague, and Sofia a more committed communist and internationalist.

In these short notes, and observing the theme which is the significance of the October Revolution, I have not discussed the problems and contradictions within the Communist Party of the Soviet Union that ultimately led to the so-called perestroika and glasnost, the climax of the processes of revisionism that brought about the restoration of capitalism in Russia and the fall of USSR and communist states of Eastern Europe. All this has been the subject of discussion by communist parties and conferences for many years and will indeed continue to be discussed. Many analyses and conclusions have been made and published concerning the subject.

In these very brief notes, I have instead chosen only to present the achievements of the October Revolution from my experiences as a communist in Kenya and Africa. I refuse to join the anti-communist propaganda that lies that the October Revolution achieved nothing and was a mistake. For I know the truth that the communist state and parties of Russia and USSR that were a consequence of the October Revolution, made great and irreversible contributions to human freedom and development, the effects of which were felt and remain throughout the world, including in Kenya and Africa. It is upon communists of the world to defend and consolidate the gains made by the October Revolution while learning from the mistakes made to organise and struggle for and build socialism and communism better.

Werugha, Tuesday, October 24, 2017

NEOLIBERAL ECONOMIC POLICIES: EXPOSING FALSE NARRATIVES BY KENYAN GOVERNMENT ON PUSH FOR PRIVATISATION

By Ibrahim Bakayoko

Immediately after independence in 1963, Kenya implemented a three tier complementary economic system of the state, cooperative and private sectors. This worked very well and the country was developing even along the emerging capitalist ruling class led by the first President of Kenya, Jomo Kenyatta. But things started going wrong at the end of the 1980s when successive regimes in the country embraced neoliberal economic policies imposed to the country by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) that are commonly known as Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs).

The SAPs, among other things, aimed at privatising economy and particularly targeted state parastatals and cooperatives. The neoliberal policies that have brought the ongoing economic crisis to the country continue to be implemented by the JUBILEE and ODM government today. In the meantime, poverty, unemployment, national debt burden, inequality and general underdevelopment of the majority of citizens continues to escalate. In fact, the government is now unable to pay civil servants and to provide basic services such as public education, health, money to the elderly and pensions. The 3.6 trillion national budget remains a meaningless annual budget of statistical figures which has nothing to show on the development of the country or welfare of the majority of citizens.

Amidst all this, those who are in favour of neoliberalism and privatisation policies make the parastatals scapegoats for the current national crisis. The promoters of neoliberalism argue that the government cannot cling to its parastatals while citizens go hungry, hospitals lack medicine, free primary education needs financing and teachers are demanding higher pay, among other things.

It's a matter of give a dog a bad name and so that you can hang it. The same government that has mismanaged the economy resorts to neo-liberal driven platitudes such as "dynamics of free enterprise dictate that the Government has no business doing business." This task, the promoters of neoliberalism argue, should be left to the private sector. The State's responsibility, in their view, is to create an enabling environment for business to grow. They also say that as long as it is carried out transparently and according to the law, privatisation of the parastatals is not only welcome but belated. This is tantamount to saying that there is nothing wrong with the robbery of public property as long as laws made to rationalise it are observed and seen



to be observed. And who made the laws? Isn't the same class of people that will buy the privatised state institutions?

When it comes to imposing neoliberal reforms upon the Kenyan people, despite its populist rhetoric, ODM does not differ with JUBILEE ideologically. They are just birds of the same feather. As a matter of fact, the whole parliament welcomes and embraces privatisation that has far reaching consequences to the economy and welfare of the nation. Actually, this is not unexpected for the Kenyan parliaments and executives that are dominated by businessmen and women. The President, Deputy President, Cabinet Secretaries, Governors and members of parliament are businessmen and women. And when businessmen and women become rulers of a country, the majority citizens cry. The history of Kenya continues to show that the business people in power always put their interests before those of the nation. It is not surprising, therefore, that members of parliament have remained silent as the property owned by the public through state corporations is grabbed by the ruling capitalist class in the name of privatisation.

Privatising the state parastatals means selling the property that belongs to all Kenyans to few local and foreign rich families. Yet, the news about the privatisation that includes strategic national assets is considered to be trivial. This, of course, works in the interests of the government and the Kenyan bourgeoisie who wish the property of all Kenyans is transferred to the ruling class without raising controversy from those who represent the interests of the masses of Kenyans.

The argument that privatisation will help the government solve the current social and economic problems including hunger, salaries, lack of medicine and other essential services, is simplistic and myopic. In the first place, if we go by the history of privatisation in Kenya as elsewhere, it escalates unemployment and therefore poverty and hunger while increasing inequality. Secondly, there is no proof hitherto that through privatisation, the enterprises will work more efficiently. In any case, even if they work more efficiently it is mostly for the benefit of the new owners who will appropriate the profit they make at the expense of society. Thirdly, privatisation of

parastatals has not reduced corruption, tribalism and nepotism in their operations in the past and there is no guarantee that it will do so today and in the future.

To justify privatisation by saying that it will raise money to deal with immediate problems is very bad leadership and economics indeed. Supposing the sale of the parastatals succeeds to raise money to provide food and salaries to teachers and other civil servants and avail medicine to public hospitals today; what will happen next year or in future when there are no longer any parastatals to privatise? What plans does the government have to raise funds to pay salaries and solve social problems that are likely to remain with the country for a long time, considering the fact that the problems have been escalated by the global Covid-19 pandemic? Is it not similar to a farmer who decides to sell all of his land in order to solve the immediate problems confronting him? Isn't it more sensible for the government to come up with sustainable strategies of reviving the economy and dealing with the present crisis rather than seeking short term populist solutions that cause even more damage in the long run? Unfortunately, the JUBILEE - ODM government and their allies are bankrupt of ideas for solving the current economic and social problems. The leaders think about how to rob the country to hoard money in billions and even trillions of shillings for themselves.

It may be true that the parastatals may not be making profit. Indeed, parastatals are not created to make profits but to deliver services to the people. Be as it may, is the failure to make profits enough reason to sell them? If private enterprises start making losses, what the owners usually do is to conduct research to find out whether the enterprise should be reformed or abandoned. Kenyan parastatals ought to be reformed rather than privatised. They used to perform in the past. There is no reason not to believe that they can be made to start performing again by studying and correcting the mistakes that have made them not to continue performing. There are enough patriotic, qualified and professional Kenyans capable of reforming the state autonomous economic institutions. There is no reason why the same professionals who run the private sector cannot be used to run the state sector as professionally and efficiently provided certain subjective and objective conditions are established. These conditions include ensuring that they are operated as independently as possible with no undue interference from politicians in power.

Some parastatals are targeted for privatisation even when they are making profits. If it is true that the parastatals cannot be reformed to profitability, then why are they being privatised instead of being let to die? Which capitalist worth his mind would invest in a company or enterprise that is incapable of making profit? Who will buy shares in a company that is likely to collapse?

The argument put forwards in favour of privatisation that Kenyans will buy shares and become owners of the privatised parastatals is another gimmick meant to hoodwink the majority of Kenyans. It is only members of the class of wealthy Kenyans who will buy substantial and durable shares of the said enterprises. Those from the working class who are lucky enough to afford to buy the shares, will only be escorting to wealth the real would be shareholders of the enterprises. This is because most people from the high echelons of the working class only buy shares for short term speculative reasons only to sell them sooner than later. But the vast majority of Kenyans who hardly handle any money and merely survive day by day would never afford to buy the shares.

Kenyans are being deceived that in order to have a growing economy the state should stay out of the economy and leave it to the private

sector and the dynamics of the free markets, i.e., only capitalism. In other words, the economic role of the state should purportedly be only to create the necessary infrastructure to facilitate a capitalist economy. But the capitalist system is class system where the means of production are owned by individuals and group of individuals or families. Capitalism, ultimately, only obeys capitalist laws of maximising profits for those who own the means of production. The majority of the people, alienated from the means of production, cannot realise true liberation, justice, equality, peace and freedom under such a system. Under capitalism, the workers, the poor and the class of the majority perpetually work and create wealth that is appropriated by the capitalists. Thus the rich continue to become richer while the poor become poorer.

Under neo-liberalism, privatisation policies are implemented through the discredited structural adjustment programs of the Bretton Woods institutions: The World Bank and International Monetary Fund which imposes them upon debt and crisis ridden economies of underdeveloped countries. But the present world financial and economic recession (actually it is capitalist crisis though it has ripple effects in the world) has disapproved this neo-liberal economics. Economic liberalisation and so called market forces have been unable to save financial institutions, businesses and industries in the USA, Europe, Japan and the whole capitalist world from recession. Capitalist economic institutions are collapsing every other day escalating unemployment, poverty and suffering among the masses while states are resorting to nationalising them to save jobs and to alleviate the crisis. Despite all this, the JUBILEE-ODM Government still insist upon leading the country along the same economic path that has driven the country into the present economic crisis where the government is even unable to pay salaries of civil servants and to prevent Kenyans from starving to death.

CPK appeals to Kenyans not to elect the candidates and parties of the ruling class - JUBILEE, ODM and OKA coalition - in the 2022 national elections. Instead, they should vote for CPK and only those parties and candidates that will provide alternative economic policies to those of neoliberalism that are pushing the country deeper and deeper into the ditch and quagmire of underdevelopment. Alternative economic policies are those that are geared away from capitalism and towards socialism

The writer is a Member of CPK Secretariat



LESSONS FOR HUMANITY FROM THE LIFE OF FIDEL CASTRO

On 13th August 2021, Comandante Fidel Castro Ruz would have turned 95 years old. Below is a repost in memoriam of Fidel Castro, that was written in 2016 by the Secretary-General of the Communist Party of Kenya, Comrade Benedict Wachira.

As Commandante Fidel Castro's ashes are interred today (4th December 2016) in Santiago de Cuba, the place where the July 26th rebel movement began its journey to overthrow dictatorship and capitalism, there are many lessons that Kenyans and the whole of humanity can learn from the life of this great legend.

He remains a great inspiration to the young people of this country who are disturbed by the ever-rising levels of poverty, greed, and corruption. In his twenties, Fidel's conviction for a just society led him to organising two attempts to overthrow the then military dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista, and he was eventually successful at the young age of thirty-two.

Fidel disembarked from the Granma boat with a rebel army of 87 men and got to the Sierra Maestra mountains with less than twenty guerrillas. Through such actions, he continues to inspire those working for a better society but are few in numbers. He was never discouraged by the loss of combatants or the greater firepower of Batista's army. He understood that what he needed most on his side was the support of the masses and not bigger guns.

Fidel teaches us to always be prepared. It was through preparation and working with the masses that Fidel Castro was able to defeat the U.S trained soldiers who invaded Cuba from the U.S in 1961 at the Bay of Pigs. It is this preparedness that has deterred the U.S from militarily invading Cuba since then.

Unlike the primitive accumulation tendencies that we see with our African leaders, Fidel Castro and his leadership never sought material riches for themselves. They worked hard to ensure that every Cuban had equal and unlimited opportunities to achieve what they humanly could. That is how Cuba was able to achieve unparalleled successes in the fields of education, preventive and curative health, sciences, gender and racial equality, housing, and employment among other aspects of human development. All this was achieved despite the existence of the most brutal economic, commercial and financial blockade from the U.S that has been in place for over 50 years.

Through Fidel, a lesson on resilience and being true to self is learned. Not many countries can survive a blockade such as the one that has been imposed on Cuba. Through resilience, Cuba has not only survived that blockade but has managed to mobilize the whole world

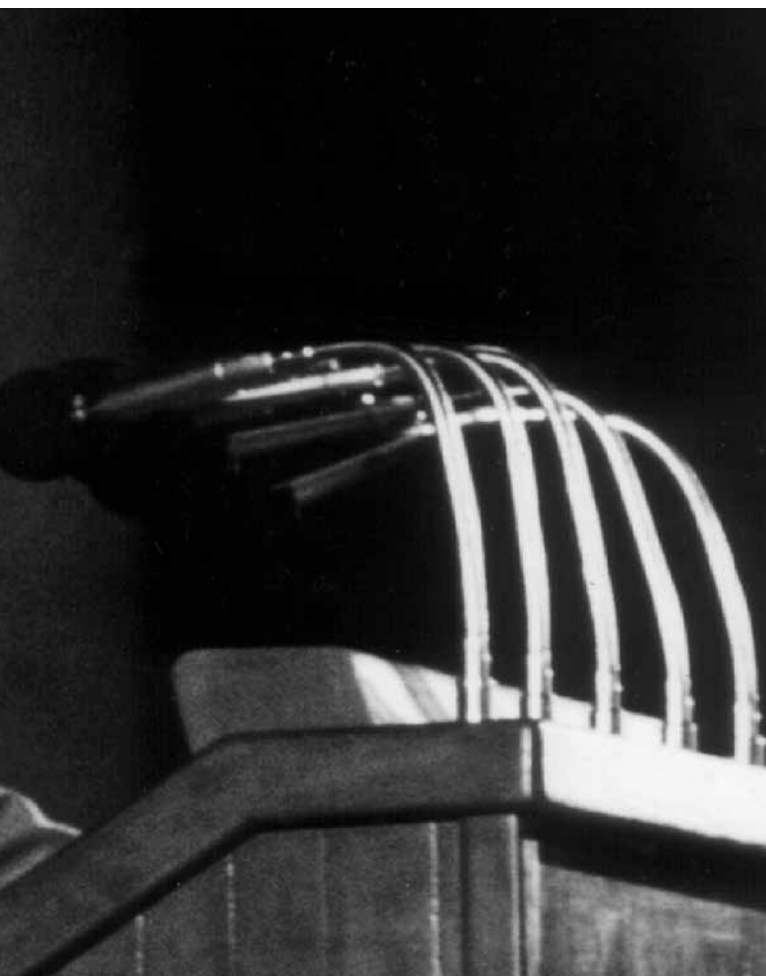


into condemning this U.S aggression on Cuba. Every year at the UN General Assembly, virtually all countries except the U.S and Israel vote against the blockade. Fifty-four years into the blockade, U.S President Barack Obama admitted that its policy had failed and he began the process of normalization of relationships between the two countries. However, the blockade remains in force.

After the fall of the USSR, Cuba lost its closest trading partner and the Cuban economy was brought to its knees. Many countries abandoned Socialism, many Socialist Political Parties across the world dropped Marxism-Leninism as their ideology, and many Marxists intellectuals and politicians no longer wished to be identified with Socialism. However, Cuba's Socialism did not fall with the fall of the wall. The country instead diversified and

realigned its Socialist economy by moving towards green energy, popular organic farming, pharmaceutical, and biomedical technology, and other niches that are today the envy of many. Out of this resilience and inspiration, Socialist countries began to rise a decade later in Latin America, from Venezuela, Bolivia, Nicaragua to Ecuador. Leftist governments also came into power in Argentina, Brazil, and other Latin American countries. Throughout Africa, the old 'Marxist' intellectuals were replaced by young Marxist revolutionaries whose understanding was/is not pegged on mother Russia but the principles of equality and prosperity of humanity, just like Fidel Castro did.

Under the leadership of Fidel Castro, Cuba taught the world the most important lessons on giving and solidarity. Cuban



Universities have awarded thousands of full scholarships to youth from developing countries who are now serving their countries as doctors and other professionals. Cuba does not award these scholarships because it is a rich country. Cuba's GDP is smaller than that of many developing countries, including Kenya. Cuba gives because sharing is a human responsibility. This poses a challenge to countries like Kenya that are surrounded by worse-off countries. How many scholarships does Kenya give to young people from Somalia, South Sudan, or DR Congo?

Cuban combatants have fought alongside their African compatriots in their struggles against colonialism and imperialism. Cubans assisted Algeria, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Angola, Namibia, Ethiopia, and South Africa either in their struggle for independence or in their wars against external aggression. As Raul Castro once said while in Angola, Cuba fought

alongside Africans and left not with coffee or minerals, but with the body bags of their heroic soldiers. Cuba's internationalist policy is unlike the U.S globalization policy; Cuba did not sacrifice its children so that they could exploit and dominate others, but it did so to fulfill its internationalist duty to humanity.

Western Sahara, Africa's last colony continues to be, up to this day. Are African countries waiting for Cubans to come and fight for the decolonization of the Saharawi? Do we think petitions and African Union Commission reports will convince Morocco to leave Western Sahara? Haven't we learned anything from the sacrifices of the Cuban people?

Today, Cuba continues with this internationalist practice, but now by sending humanitarian 'combatants' wherever humanity needs them. From hurricane crises in Asia and the Americas to the Ebola crisis in West Africa, Cuban doctors have always been on the frontlines of fighting and containing these disasters. While commenting on the Haitian earthquake, one Haitian expressed his gratitude to the Cuban doctors by stating that "After God, Fidel."

Fidel gave us lessons on how to fight today's emerging crimes like terrorism. In the 80s and the '90s, terrorists from Miami (supported by the CIA) tried to destroy Cuba's tourism industry by bombing hotels, Cuban airplanes, and other economic interests, even going to the extent of using bioterrorism on innocent civilians. Rather than terrorise and alienate innocent civilians like the Kenyan government is doing today, Fidel sent his security personnel to infiltrate the enemy and unearth terror plans before they happened. That is how the world-famous Cuban anti-terrorist heroes, popularly known as the Cuban 5 came to be (They were arrested in the U.S and given harsh/life sentences for espionage, but were freed by President Obama in December 2014).

Throughout his life, Fidel has survived assassination attempts on his life and worst still on his character, but this never dampened his resolve. They lied about his wealth but he continued living a simple life. They lied about human rights violations but he continued to provide the highest attainable human rights for his people. Even at his death, reactionary media continues to desecrate his name by publishing lies about this great revolutionary. Fidel has taught us to ignore the liars and detractors and instead soldier on and do what is right.

I, therefore, reiterate the homage that Carlos Aznárez paid to Fidel Castro where he wrote;

"So, when difficulties seem too much, and we believe we're running out of strength, when we lack answers and when confusion makes us doubt about who the enemy is when times are dark and without hope, let's go back to Fidel, to his ideas, to his ethic, to his audacity, to his courage, to his revolutionary power, and let's rise again to continue this wonderful adventure to take the skies.

A little heartbroken but never defeated, we salute you, dear Commander. We will turn back to you now and then and ask you: "Are we doing well, Fidel?"

An avid reader, a sportsman, an art enthusiast, a teacher, a great leader, a prolific writer, an environmentalist, an orator, a thinker, a fighter, and above all, a Communist.

Hasta Siempre Comandante,
Long Live Fidel Castro!
Long Live Socialism!
We shall be Victorious!

Benedict WACHIRA
Secretary-General
Communist Party of Kenya

December 4th, 2016

HYPOCRITE

by Revolutionary Patriot

forget it!
even if it were true
you fought for uhuru
even if it is a fact
that you were part of the Land and Freedom Army
whatever you said and did
against british colonialism
if today you are a traitor
if at this time you are a puppet of imperialism
if now you are an exploiter
if you are a land and plot grabber
if you support the oppressive system
if you claim there is freedom in Kenya today
truly truly I say unto you
you are not a peoples hero
stop thinking you are anywhere near a patriot

because your greed
the lust for money and wealth
your hypocrisy and opportunism
has rubbed your clean history of yesterday
really, you cannot cheat us you won't fool us
you may talk but we will not listen to you
at the present history of our country
you are not the friend of the struggle for national liberation
today you have become an enemy
you hinder the development of our country

for you have accepted
to be a dog of neo-colonialism
as you talk the language of oppressors
because today you are a hyena and a pig
now you are like a tick and bedbug
for you are a big prostitute these days

a true hero of the masses
a real patriot
travels up to the end of the journey
and the journey of our struggle is still there
it is not yet over our safari of freedom and development
for neo-colonialism remains in our country
the kanu dictatorship oppresses the majority of citizens
although there is a flag fluttering
freedom itself is not here
so you were struggling for your own stomach!
ahh your aim was to take the place of the colonialist!
we rebelled against the humiliation
of being oppressed by the British
do you imagine we will embrace
the shame of being dominated by fellow Africans?
you devil of a person!
traitor hiding in the noble name of Mau Mau!
hypocrite!

Kibos Main Prison 25-02-1988

TRANSFER

by Revolutionary Patriot

When they come at Kamiti to see me
 You will explain to them
 You will tell them I am no longer at Kamiti Prison
 They have transferred me 800 kilometres
 Away from Werugha, where I was born
 They have taken me to Eldoret
 Not at Eldoret town, not on a tour
 They have taken me to prison
 To bury me in the pit of torture
 When my wife comes to see me
 Try to inform her

 But also tell them not to worry
 Being transferred doesn't trouble me that much
 Let them understand
 Because at no time did I request
 To be imprisoned, to be imprisoned in any prison
 For prison is prison, wherever it is it is prison
 Hunger, boredom, brutality and torture without end
 So, will the oppression inside Eldoret Prison
 Be more than that here at Kamiti Maximum?
 Sooner or later I will find out.....!

Furthermore, surely dear comrades
 Their separating us will not separate us
 We shall be together
 Everytime and everywhere at all times
 The agony with us my comrades
 Will paste us together always
 True, they will never succeed
 To separate us ideologically
 We have decided to be friends
 To be comrades in the revolution

How can they ever divide us?
 Our comradeship
 Has been born by the great work and responsibility
 Given to us by history
 It is held by the glue of all that
 We have experienced and are experiencing together
 Let us love one another for ever.....!!!!

Comrades, when they come to visit us
 Tell them, wherever they will imprison me
 One day I will be released
 I will be released I will be released
 Because whichever has a beginning also has an end
 One day we shall come out of here
 To reunite with comrades and patriots of our country
 Not in the life of laziness and self-indulgence
 But in the great and noble work
 The work of searching for the freedom and liberation of Kenya
 The work of struggling
 Struggling against exploitation of person by person
 For now keep on remembering
 And to them also explain that they may know
 While in Eldoret Prison
 Or wherever they may take me
 Come rain come shine, whatever come may
 I will not change my mind, I shall never betray the struggle
 I will continue fighting for my humanity
 I will continue with the revolutionary stand.....

A time like this
 When hundreds of patriots
 Involved in the liberation struggle
 Are in detention or prison or exile
 We cannot indulge in self-pity inside here
 We cannot just think of only our agony

We cannot accept to give up hope
 We must struggle at all times
 The medicine of life in prison is struggle
 That which is more moral and humane is struggle.....

Those who are more humane
 Have chosen the road of struggle
 And we also have opted not to be left behind
 For our love is also the love for our country
 It is true and just love
 It is love for freedom and democracy
 The love for struggling for a new socialist society
 If we remain true to what we have resolved together
 If we make revolution to be our life at all times
 Our friendship will last, it will last forever
 The sadness of bidding farewell to one another now
 Manifests the extent of our relationship
 It shows the level of our comradeship
 How we value love!
 And since we value love
 We shall give our lives to ensure
 That tomorrow
 Those who love one another
 Will not experience the pain we are experiencing today
 The pain of friends being separated by prison

Kamiti Maximum Prison 13-1-1987

[illegible]

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СРК